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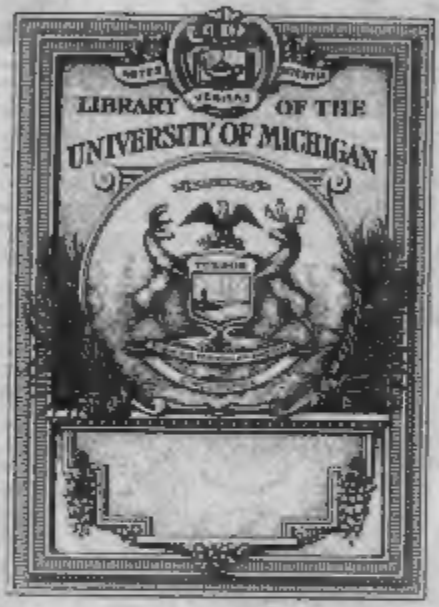
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THE

# STRAND MAGAZINE

## An Illustrated Monthly

Vol. LXXXV

JANUARY to JUNE

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Journal
Feb 1931

# INDEX.


PAGE

ACROSTICS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 111, 195, 327, 447, 491, 611

AMONG THIEVES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *W. Townend* 663
Illustrations by Leo Bates.

ARLEN, MICHAEL.
THE BLACK ARCHANGEL .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 14

ARNOLD-FORSTER, MRS. H. O.
A REMARKABLE DREAM .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 147

ART AND THE CAMERA .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Frank Rutter* 64
With Special Illustrations in Photogravure.

ATALANTA .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Warwick Deeping* 575
Illustrations by Seabright.

BASHFORD, H. H.
THE MAN ON BEN NA GARVE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 161

B.B.C., THE BRIGHT YOUNG MEN OF THE .. .. .. .. *Raymond Price* 26
Illustrations from Photographs.

BLACK ARCHANGEL, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Michael Arlen* 14
Illustrations by Alfred Sindall.

BLACKWOOD, ALGERNON.
A REMARKABLE DREAM .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 144

BOULENGER, E. G.
BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE ZOO AQUARIUM .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 176

BRAVE MEN, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Margaret Kennedy* 451
Illustrations by Forster.

CAMERA, ART AND THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Frank Rutter* 64

CASTAWAYS, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *P. G. Wodehouse* 563
Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson.

CHESTERTON, G. K.
THE DETECTION CLUB .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 462

CHURCHILL, P.C., THE RIGHT HON. WINSTON.
GREAT FIGHTERS IN LOST CAUSES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 246

CINEMA, THE COMIC SIDE OF THE .. .. .. .. .. *Fenn Sherie* 290
Illustrations from Drawings.

COLERIDGE, THE HON. STEPHEN.
A REMARKABLE DREAM .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 145

COLLINS, DALE.
LAUGH, IF YOU LIKE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 424

CONTRACT BRIDGE.. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Colonel G. G. J. Walshe*
CORRECT CALLING .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 98
APPROACH BIDS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 209
THE OPENING BID .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 315
FORCING BIDS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 435
ENCOURAGING BIDS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 558

CORAL BOX, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *H. de Vere Stacpoole* 534
Illustrations by Edward Osmond

CORRECT KIT, THE.. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Lord Dunsany* 205
Illustration by James Short.

CREEL, GEORGE.
PRESENCE OF MIND .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 660

DARLINGTON, W. A.
MR. CRONK AT SEA .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 212

DARWIN, BERNARD.
SIGNS OF THE TIMES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 543


Digitized by Google

PAGE

DEEPING, WARWICK.
A Remarkable Dream .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 147
Atalanta .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 575

DETECTION CLUB, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *G. K. Chesterton* 462
Illustrations from Drawings and a Photograph.

DOG'S DAY, A .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Charles Graves* 419
Illustrations from Photographs.

DOUBLE DEALING .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *H. de Vere Stacpoole* 651
Illustrations by B. J. Dawson.

DOYLE, LYNN.
A Tune on the Triangle .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 438
The Flag and the Flapper .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 602

DREAMS, SOME REMARKABLE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 144
A Symposium of Celebrities.
Illustrations from Photographs and Decorations by Edgar Spenceley.

DUNSANY, LORD.
The Correct Kit .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 205

EGYPT, A SHORT GUIDE TO .. .. .. .. .. .. .. ..*A. P. Herbert* 350
Illustrations from Drawings by Bert Thomas and from Photographs.

ENGLAND THE INEXHAUSTIBLE .. .. .. .. .. *E. V. Lucas, C. H.* 623
Illustrations from Special Photographs by J. Dixon-Scott.

FACE OF JUDAS, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Sir Philip Gibbs* 36
Illustrations by Seabright.

FEET OF CLAY .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *B. L. Jacot* 634
Illustrations by Balliol Salmon.

FIGHTERS IN LOST CAUSES, GREAT .. .. *The Right Hon. Winston Churchill, P.C.* 246
Decorations by Gordon Nicoll.

FILM STUDIOS, SOME SECRETS OF THE .. .. .. .. *W. Holt White* 644
Illustrations from Photographs.

FLAG AND THE FLAPPER, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. *Lynn Doyle* 602
Illustrations by Illingworth.

FOLLOWING PEOPLE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Roland Pertwee* 256
Illustrations by Forster.

FOX MEDITATES, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Rudyard Kipling* 126
Illustrations by Gordon Nicoll.

FRANKAU, GILBERT.
A Man's Man .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 235
The Joyous Journey of Gypsy and June .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 469

GANGSTER'S WEDDING, THE .. .. .. *F. Tennyson Jesse and Laurence Kirk* 74
Illustrations by Steven Spurrier.

GIBBS, SIR PHILIP.
The Face of Judas .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 36

GRAHAM, STEPHEN.
A Remarkable Dream .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 148

GRAVES, CHARLES.
A Dog's Day .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 419

GURDON, J. E.
The Peaslake Crash .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 101

HER LOST CHANCE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *H. de Vere Stacpoole* 56
Illustrations by Frank Oldham.

HERBERT, A. P.
A Short Guide to Egypt .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 350

HOUSE WITH THE KENNELS, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. *"Sapper"* 388
Illustrations by Jack M. Faulks.

ILLUSION, THE ART OF .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *W. Holt White* 644
Illustrations from Photographs.

INCORRIGIBLE CORINNE .. .. .. .. .. .. *Roland Pertwee* 522
Illustrations by J. Morton Sale.

IT'S PARIS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Penrhyn Stanlaws* 84
Illustration by the Author.

Digitized by Google

PAGE

JACOBS, W. W.
THE STOWAWAY .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 227

JACOT, B. L.
FEET OF CLAY .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 634

JAMESON, STORM.
A REMARKABLE DREAM .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 148
THE YOUNG ARE SO HARD .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 168
MR. GEEN LOSES HIS WATCH .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 612

JANE OF THE ROUGH TONGUE .. .. .. .. .. *J. Hastings Turner* 592
Illustrations by Frank Oldham.

JESSE AND LAURENCE KIRK, F. TENNYSON.
THE GANGSTER'S WEDDING .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 74

JOYOUS JOURNEY OF GYPSY AND JUNE, THE .. .. .. *Gilbert Frankau* 469
Illustrations by Stanley Davis.

JUICE OF AN ORANGE, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. *P. G. Wodehouse* 132
Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson.

KENNEDY, MARGARET.
THE BRAVE MEN .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 451
KIPLING, RUDYARD.
THE FOX MEDITATES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 126
KIRK, F. TENNYSON JESSE AND LAURENCE.
THE GANGSTER'S WEDDING .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 74

LADY OF QUALITY, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. *Margery Sharp* 328
Illustrations by Elizabeth Earnshaw.
LADY OF THE LARDER, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. *H. A. Vachell* 88
Illustrations by Treyer Evans.
LAST HALF HOUR, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Bruce Marshall* 318
Illustrations by Albert Bailey.
LAUGH, IF YOU LIKE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Dale Collins* 424
Illustrations by Alfred Sindall.
LOST CAUSES, GREAT FIGHTERS IN .. .. *The Right Hon. Winston Churchill, P.C.* 246
LUCAS, C.H., E. V.
WINCHESTER .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 48
ENGLAND THE INEXHAUSTIBLE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 623

MACKAIL, DENIS.
MUSICAL MIRANDA .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 152
SPRING! .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 410
THE SEA AGAIN .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 503
MAN ON BEN NA GARVE, THE .. .. .. .. .. *H. H. Bashford* 162
Illustrations by R. M. Chandler.
MAN ON THE ROAD, THE .. .. .. .. .. *Temple Thurston* 382
Illustrations by Gordon Nicoll.
MAN WITH SAMPLES, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. *"Sapper"* 492
Illustrations by Jack M. Faulks.
MAN'S MAN, A .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Gilbert Frankau* 235
Illustrations by Seabright.
MARSHALL, BRUCE.
THE LAST HALF HOUR .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 318
MAUGHAM, SOMERSET .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Godfrey Winn* 584
Illustrations from Photographs and Paintings.
MAXWELL, W. B.
THREE GENERATIONS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 480
MERRICK, LEONARD.
A MISADVENTURE IN PARIS .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 115
MINNIE THE MONK .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *W. Townend* 549
Illustrations by Eric Fraser.
MISADVENTURE IN PARIS, A .. .. .. .. .. .. *Leonard Merrick* 115
Illustrations by Jack M. Faulks.

Digitized by Google

PAGE

MONEY'S WORTH .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *G. B. Stern* 358
Illustrations by John Pimlott.

MR. CRONK AT SEA .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *W. A. Darlington* 212
Illustrations by Treyer Evans.

MR. GEEN LOSES HIS WATCH .. .. .. .. .. .. *Storm Jameson* 612
Illustrations by John Pimlott.

MUSICAL MIRANDA .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Denis Mackail* 152
Illustrations by Frank Oldham

NATURE PHOTOGRAPH, MY BEST.
Mr. and Mrs. Seton Gordon, Neville Kingston, Stanley Crook, Niall Rankin, D. Seth-Smith, A. W. Kerr, Frances Pitt and F. B. Kirkman .. .. .. 512

NEVINSON, R.B.A., R.O.I., C. R. W.
A Remarkable Dream .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 149

NODDER, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *P. G. Wodehouse* 3
Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson.

PEASLAKE CRASH, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *J. E. Gurdon* 161
Illustrations by B. J. Dawson.

PERPLEXITIES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 112, 224, 336, 448, 560, 672

PERTWEE, ROLAND.
Following People .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 256
Possession .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 360
Incorrigible Corinne .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 522

PHOTOGRAPHY, SOME WONDERS OF .. .. .. .. .. *Frank Rutter* 400
With Special Illustrations in Photogravure.

POSSESSION .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Roland Pertwee* 360
Illustrations by P. R. Maxwell.

PRESENCE OF MIND .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *George Creel* 660
Illustration by Keith Bryant.

PRICE, RAYMOND.
The Bright Young Men of the B.B.C. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 26

RISE OF MINNA NORDSTROM, THE .. .. .. .. .. *P. G. Wodehouse* 339
Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson.

ROBERTS, MORLEY.
A Remarkable Dream .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 150

RUTTER, FRANK.
Art and the Camera .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 64
Some Wonders of Photography .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 400

"SAPPER."
The Tidal River .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 184
The House with the Kennels .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 388
The Man With Samples .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 492

SEA AGAIN, THE .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Denis Mackail* 503
Illustrations by Frank Oldham.

SHARP, MARGERY.
The Lady of Quality .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 328

SHERIE, FENN.
The Comic Side of the Cinema .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 290

SIGNS OF THE TIMES .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Bernard Darwin* 543
Illustrations from Photographs and Drawings.

SLEATH, FREDERICK.
The Two Lost Cases .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 307

SPRING! .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. *Denis Mackail* 410
Illustrations by Frank Oldham.

STACPOOLE, H. DE VERE.
Her Lost Chance .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 56
That Kid! .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 282
The Coral Box .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 534
Double Dealing .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. .. 651

Digitized by Google

STANLAWS, PENRHYN
IT'S PARIS 84

STERN MARGUERITE.
STRANGE GUEST 270

STERN, G. B.
MONEY'S WORTH 358

STOWAWAY, THE *W W Jacobs* 227
Illustrations by Will Owen.

STRANGE GUEST *Marguerite Steen* 270
Illustrations by N M Hughes.

THAT KID *H de Vere Stacpoole* 281
Illustrations by Edward Osmond

THREE GENERATIONS *B B Maxwell* 480
Illustrations by Elizabeth Earnshaw

THURSTON TEMPLE
THE MAN ON THE ROAD 382

TIDAL RIVER, THE *"Sapper"* 184
Illustrations by Jack M Faulks.

TOWNEND W
MISS E THE MONK 549
AMONG THE EVES 603

TUNE ON THE TRIANGLE A *Lynn Doyle* 438
Illustrations by Illingworth.

TURNER, JOHN HASTINGS
WARNING TO POETS 297
JANE OF THE ROUGH TONGUE 592

TWO LOST CASES, THE *Frederick Steath* 307
Illustrations by W R S. Stott

VACHELL, H A
THE LADY OF THE LARDER 88

WALSHE, COLONEL G. G. J
CONTRACT BRIDGE
CORRECT CALLING 58
APPROACH BIDS 209
THE OPENING BID 315
FORCING BIDS 435
ENCOURAGING BIDS 558

WARNING TO POETS *John Hastings Turner* 297
Illustrations by Stanley Davis.

WHITE, OSMAR E.
WRONG FOOT FORWARD 196

WHITE, W HOLT
THE ART OF ILLUSION 144

WINCHESTER *E V Lucas, C H* 48
Illustrations from Photographs

WINN, GODFREY
SOMERSET MAUGHAM: THE MAN AND HIS METHOD 584

WODEHOUSE, P G
THE NODDER 3
THE JUICE OF AN ORANGE 132
THE RISE OF MINNA NORDSTROM 330
THE CASTAWAYS 563

WRONG FOOT FORWARD *Osmar E White* 196
Illustrations by Collier

YOUNG ARE SO HARD THE *Storm Jameson* 168
Illustrations by Grant Reid.

ZOO AQUARIUM, BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE *E G Boulenger* 176
Illustrations from Photographs.

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# THE STRAND MAGAZINE

## Contents for January, 1933

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Frontispiece "Oh, Wilmot," she cried, shooting into his arms. He glared at the others. "Wuckoo, wuckoo!" he shouted.


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| THE NODDER<br>Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson | P. G. WODEHOUSE | 3 |
| THE BLACK ARCHANGEL<br>Illustrations by Alfred Sindall | MICHAEL ARLEN | 14 |
| THE BRIGHT YOUNG MEN OF THE B.B.C.<br>Illustrations from Photographs | RAYMOND PRICE | 26 |
| THE FACE OF JUDAS<br>Illustrations by Seabright | SIR PHILIP GIBBS | 36 |
| WINCHESTER<br>Illustrations from Photographs | E. V. LUCAS, C.H. | 48 |
| HER LOST CHANCE<br>Illustrations by Frank Oldham | H. DE VERE STACPOOLE | 56 |
| ART AND THE CAMERA<br>With Special Illustrations in Photogravure | FRANK RUTTER | 64 |
| THE GANGSTER'S WEDDING<br>Illustrations by Steven Spurrier | F. TENNYSON JESSE AND LAURENCE KIRK | 74 |
| IT'S PARIS<br>Illustration by the Author | PENRHYN STANLAWS | 84 |
| THE LADY OF THE LARDER<br>Illustrations by Trajer Evgni | H. A. VACHELL | 88 |
| CORRECT CALLING IN CONTRACT BRIDGE | COLONEL C. G. J. WALSHE | 98 |
| THE PEASLAKE CRASH<br>Illustrations by R. J. Mawson | J. E. GURDON | 101 |
| ACROSTICS | | 111 |
| PERPLEXITIES | | 112 |


**The characters and names in the stories in "The Strand Magazine" are entirely imaginary and have no reference to real persons.**

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# "STRAND MAGAZINE" AD-PICTURE

## RESULT

**The October issue of THE STRAND MAGAZINE contained a Composite Picture consisting of 72 portions of the advertisements in that number. £100 and 100 SPECIAL PRIZES were offered to readers who submitted lists naming the advertisements from which these portions were taken. The following is a list of those advertisements:—**

Rowntree's Elect Cocoa (page 1), Schools and Accountancy (2), Hydrolene (3), Player's Please (4), Jaeger (5), Sharp's Toffee (6), Waterman's Ideal (7), Bile Beans (8), Bovril (9), Pyrene (10), Bird's Custard (11), Hornimans Tea (12), Electrical Association for Women (13), Brasso (14), Pelmanism (15), Rinso (16), Wright's Coal Tar Soap (17), Bryant & May's Matches (18), Pitman's Shorthand (19), Hinde's Curlers (20), Kodak (21), Wincarnis (22), Iron Jelloids (23), Bile Beans (24), Eno's Fruit Salt (25), Mellin's Food (26), Pelmanism (27), Player's Please (28), Sharp's Toffee (29), Waterman's Ideal (30), Rowntree's Elect Cocoa (31), Oxo (Cover 3), Flexrite (Cover 3).

**The following 86 competitors were successful in finding all the portions, and the Cash Prize of £100 has been equally divided amongst them:—**

Atkinson, Miss J. E. F., Gloucester Terr., Lancaster Gate, W.2
Bright, Miss I., [illegible]
[illegible], Headland, Kettering, Northants
[illegible]

**The Silver Prizes have been awarded to 100 readers whose entries contained 71 correct portions. Space will not permit the printing of their names and addresses in "THE STRAND MAGAZINE," but a full list of winners will be laid on application to The Competition Editor, 10, Kirle Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2.**

*January.*
1933

*"Oh Wilmot," she cried, shooting into his arms.*
*He glared at the others*
*"Wuckoo, cuckoo!" he shouted.*

# THE NODDER

## P. G. WODEHOUSE

*Illustrated by*
GILBERT WILKINSON

THE presentation of the super-film, 'Baby Boy,' at the Bijou Dream in the High Street had led to an animated discussion in the bar-parlour of the Anglers' Rest. Several of our prominent first-nighters had dropped in there for a much-needed restorative after the performance, and the conversation had turned to the subject of child stars in the motion-pictures.

'I understand they're all midgets, really,' said a Rum and Milk.

"That's what I heard, too," said a Whisky and Splash. 'Somebody told me that at every studio in Hollywood they have a special man who does nothing but go round the country, combing the circuses, and when he finds a good midget he signs him up.

Almost automatically we looked at Mr Mulliner, as if seeking from that unfailing fount of wisdom an authoritative pronouncement on this difficult point. The Sage of the bar-parlour sipped his hot Scotch and lemon for a moment in thoughtful silence.

"The question you have raised," he said at length, "is one that has occupied the minds of thinking men ever since these little excrescences first became popular on the screen. Some argue that mere children could scarcely be so loathsome. Others maintain that a right-minded midget would hardly stoop to some of the things these child stars do. But then, arising from that we have to ask ourselves, Are midgets right minded? The whole thing is very moot.'

'Well, this kid we saw to-night," said the Rum and Milk. 'This Johnny Bingley. Nobody's going to tell me he's only eight years old.'

'In the case of Johnny Bingley,' assented Mr Mulliner, "your intuition has not led you astray. I believe he is in the early forties. I happen to know all about him because it was he who played so important a part in the affairs of my distant connexion Wilmot."

"Was your distant connexion Wilmot a midget?"

"No. He was a Nodder."

"A what?"

Mr Mulliner smiled.

'It is not easy to explain to the lay mind the extremely intricate ramifications of the personnel of a Hollywood motion-picture organization. Putting it as briefly as possible a Nodder is something like a Yes-man, only lower in the social scale. A Yes-man's duty is to attend conferences and say 'Yes.' A Nodder's, as the name implies, is to nod. The chief executive throws out some statement of opinion, and looks about him expectantly. This is the cue for the senior


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Yes-man to say Yes. He is followed in order of precedence, by the second Yes-man or Vice-Yesser as he is sometimes called and the junior Yes-man. Only when all the Yes-men have yessed do the Nodders begin to function. They nod.

A Pint of Half-and-Half said it didn't sound much of a job.

NOT very exalted agreed Mr. Mulliner) It is a position which you might say, roughly, ties socially somewhere in between that of the man who works the wind machine and that of a writer of additional dialogue. There is also a class of Untouchables who are known as Nodders' Assistants, but this is a technicality with which I need not trouble you. At the time when my story begins, my distant connexion Wilmot was a full Nodder. Yet even so there is no doubt that he was aiming a little high when he ventured to aspire to the hand of Mabel Potter the private secretary of Mr. Schnellenhamer, the head of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation.

Indeed between a girl so placed and a man in my distant connexion's position there could, in ordinary circumstances, scarcely have been anything in the nature of friendly intercourse. Wilmot owed his entry to her good graces to a combination of two facts—the first, that in his youth he had been brought up on a farm and so was familiar with the customs and habits of birds, the second that before coming to Hollywood Miss Potter had been a bird imitator in Vaudeville.

Too little has been written of Vaudeville bird-imitators and their passionate devotion to their art, but everybody knows the saying. Once A Bird-Imitator, Always a Bird-Imitator. The Mabel Potter of to-day might be a mere lovely machine for taking notes and tapping out her employer's correspondence, but within her there still burned the steady flame of those high ideals which always animate a girl who has once been accustomed to render to packed houses the liquid notes of the cuckoo, the whip-poor-will, and other songsters who are familiar to you all.

That this was so was revealed to Wilmot one morning when wandering past an outlying set, he heard raised voices within and recognizing the silver tones of his adored one, paused to listen. Mabel Potter seemed to be having some kind of an argument with a director.

Considering," she was saying, "that I only did it to oblige and that it is in no sense a part of my regular duties for which I draw my salary, I must say——

All right, all right," said the director. "——that you have a nerve calling me down on the subject of cuckoos. Let me tell you, Mr. Murgatroyd, that I have made a lifelong study of cuckoos, and know them from soup to nuts. I have imitated cuckoos in every theatre on every circuit in the land, not to mention urgent offers from England, Australia, and——

I know, I know," said the director.

South Africa, which I was compelled to turn down because my poor mother then living, disliked ocean travel. My cuckoo is world-famous. Give me time to go home and fetch it and I'll show you the clipping from the *St. Louis Post-Democrat* where it says——"

I know, I know, I know," said the director. But all the same I think I'll have someone do it who'll do it my way."

The next moment Mabel Potter had swept out, and Wilmot addressed her with respectful tenderness.

Is something the matter, Miss Potter? Is there anything I can do?

Mabel Potter was shaking with dry sobs. Her self-esteem had been rudely bruised.

'Well, look," she said. They ask me as a special favour to come and imitate the call of the cuckoo for this new picture, and when I do it Mr. Murgatroyd says I've done it wrong."

The hound," breathed Wilmot.

He says a cuckoo goes Cuckoo, Cuckoo, when everybody who has studied the question knows that what it really goes is Wuckoo, Wuckoo.'

'Of course. Not a doubt about it. A distinct 'W' sound.'

'As if it had got something wrong with the roof of its mouth.

'Or had omitted to have its adenoids treated.'

Wuckoo, wuckoo. Like that.'

'Exactly like that," said Wilmot.

The girl gazed at him with a new friendliness.

'I'll bet you've heard rafts of cuckoos.'

Millions. I was brought up on a farm.'

'These know-it-all directors make me tired.'

Me, too," said Wilmot. Then, putting his fate to the touch, to win or lose it all, I wonder, Miss Potter, if you would care to step round to the commissary and join me in a small coffee?

She accepted gratefully, and from that moment their intimacy may be said to have begun. Day after day in the weeks that followed, at such times as their duties would permit, you would see them sitting together either in the commissary or on the steps of some oriental palace on the outskirts of the lot—he gazing silently up into her face, she, with an artist's enthusiasm in her eyes, filling the air with the note of

the Baltimore oriole or possibly the more strident cry of the chicken-hawk. While ever and anon by special request, she would hitch up the muscles of the larynx and go

Wuckoo wuckoo.

But when at length Wilmot emboldened, asked her to be his wife, she was kind but firm.

"No," she said. "I like you, Wilmot Sometimes I even think that I love you But I can never marry a mere serf

"A what was that?

A serf A peon A man who earns his living by nodding his head at Mr Schnellenhamer A Yes-man would be bad enough but a Nodder!

She paused, and Wilmot, from sheer force of habit, nodded

I am ambitious, proceeded Mabel The man I marry must be a king among men—well, I mean, at least a supervisor Rather than wed a Nodder I would starve in the gutter

The objection to this as a practical policy was, of course, that owing to the weather being so uniformly fine all the year round, there are no gutters in Hollywood But Wilmot felt that this was not the time to mention it. He uttered a heart-stricken cry, not unlike the mating-call of the Alaskan wild-duck, and began to plead with her

But she was obdurate

We will always be friends,' she said "but marry a Nodder no

And, with a brief Wuckoo,' she turned away

THERE is not much scope or variety of action open to a man whose heart has just been shattered and whose romance has proved an empty dream Practically speaking, only two courses lie before him. He can go out West and begin a new life, or he can drown his sorrows in drink In Wilmot's case, the former of these alternatives was rendered impossible by the fact that he was out West already Little wonder then, that as he sat in his lonely lodging that night his thoughts turned ever more and more urgently to the second

Like all the Mulliners, my distant connexion had always been a scrupulously temperate man Had his love-life but run smoothly he would have been amply contented with a nut sundae or a malted milk after the day's work But now with desolation staring him in the face, he felt a fierce urge towards something with a bit more kick in it

Now it so happened that listening to the idle gossip of the studio, Wilmot had become aware that about half-way down Hollywood Boulevard there was a place where, if you knocked twice and whistled "My Country 'tis of Thee," a grill opened and a whiskered face appeared The Face said

Well?" and you said, "Service and Co-operation" and then the door was unbarred and you saw before you the primrose path that led to perdition And as this was precisely what in his present mood, Wilmot most desired to locate, you will readily understand how it came about that, some hour and a half later, he was seated at a table in this establishment, feeling a good deal better

How long it was before he realized that his table had another occupant he could not have said. But came a moment when, raising his glass, he found himself looking into the eyes of a small child in a Lord Fauntleroy costume, in whom he recognized none other than Little Johnny Bingley the Idol of American Motherhood the star of this picture 'Baby Boy' which you, gentlemen, have just been witnessing at the Bijou Dream in the High Street

To say that Wilmot was astonished at seeing this infant in such surroundings would be to overstate the case. After half an hour at this home-from-home the customer is seldom in a condition to be astonished at anything—not even a gamboge elephant in golfing costume He was, however sufficiently interested to say "Hello'

Hello,' replied the child Listen,' he went on placing a cube of ice in his tumbler, "don't tell old Schnellenhamer you saw me here There's a morality clause in my contract

Tell who?" said Wilmot

Schnellenhamer"

How do you spell it?"

I don't know

Nor do I" said Wilmot. Nevertheless, be that as it may" he continued, impulsively, "he shall never learn from me

Who won't? said the child

He won't, said Wilmot

Won't what?" asked the child

Learn from me," said Wilmot.

Learn what?" inquired the child

I've forgotten, said Wilmot

They sat for a space in silence, each busy with his own thoughts

You're Johnny Bingley aren't you? said Wilmot

"Who is? said the child

You are'

I'm what?'

Listen, said Wilmot. 'My name is Mulliner That's what it is, Mulliner And let them make the most of it.

Who?

I don't know" said Wilmot

He gazed at his companion affectionately

It was a little difficult to focus him, because he kept flickering, but Wilmot could take the big, broad view about that. If the heart is in the right place, he reasoned, what does it matter if the body flickers?

'You're a good chap, Bingley."

"So are you, Mulliner."

"Both good chaps?"

'Both good chaps.'

Making two in all?' asked Wilmot, anxious to get this straight.

That's how I work it out."

'Yes, two,' agreed Wilmot, ceasing to twiddle his fingers. 'In fact you might say both gentlemen.'

Both gentlemen is correct.

Then let us see what we have got. Yes, said Wilmot as he laid down the pencil with which he had been writing figures on the tablecloth, "here are the final returns as I get them. Two good chaps, both gentlemen. And yet,' he said, frowning in a puzzled way, 'that seems to make four, and there are only two of us. However,' he went on, 'let that go. Immaterial. Not germane to the issue. The fact we have to face, Bingley, is that my heart is heavy.

You don't say!

I do say. Heavy. Hearty. My bing is heavy.

What's the trouble?

Wilmot decided to confide in this singularly broad-minded and sympathetic infant. He felt he had never met a child he liked better.

Well, it's like this.

*He found himself looking into the eyes of a small child in a Lord Fauntleroy costume, in whom he recognised none other than Little Johnny Bingley, the Idol of American Motherhood.*

"What is?"

"This is."

"Like what?"

I'm telling you. The girl I love won't marry me."

She won't?'

'So she says. And I have generally found her pretty accurate in her statements.'

Well, well," said the child star commiseratingly. "That's too bad. Spurned your love, did she?"

'You're dern tooting she spurned my love,' said Wilmot. 'Spurned it good and hard. Some spurning.'

'Well, that's how it goes," said the child star. "What a world."

You're right—what a world.'

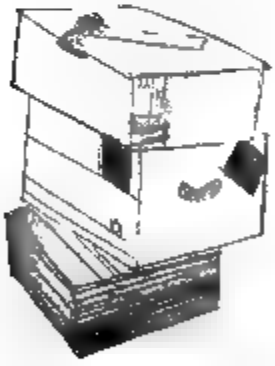
I shouldn't wonder if it didn't make your heart heavy.'

You bet it makes my heart heavy," said Wilmot, crying softly. He dried his eyes on the edge of the tablecloth. "How can I shake off this awful depression?" he asked.

The child star reflected.

Well, I'll tell you," he said. "I know a better place than this one. It's out Venice way. We might give it a try."

We certainly might.'



And then there's another one down at Santa Monica."

We'll go there, too," said Wilmot. "The great thing is to keep moving about and seeing fresh faces."

"The faces are always nice and fresh down at Venice."

Then let's go,' said Wilmot.

It was at eleven o'clock on the following morning that Mr Schnellenhamer burst in upon his fellow-executive, Mr Levitsky, with agitation written on every feature of his expressive face. The cigar trembled between his lips.

Listen!" he said. "Do you know what?"

Listen!" said Mr Levitsky. "What?'

"Johnny Bingley has just been in to see me."

"If he wants a raise of salary, talk about the Depression.'

Raise of salary? What's worrying me is how long is he going to be worth the salary he's getting?'

"Worth it?" Mr Levitsky stared. "Johnny Bingley? The Child With The Tear Behind The Smile? The Idol of American Motherhood?"

Yes, and how long is he going to be the idol of American Motherhood after American Motherhood finds out he's a midget from Connolly's Circus, and an elderly hard-boiled midget at that?"

Well, nobody knows that but you and me.'

Is that so?' said Mr Schnellenhamer. "Well, let me tell you, he was out on a toot last night with one of my Nodders, and he comes to me this morning and says he couldn't actually swear he told this guy he was a midget, but on the other hand, he rather thinks he must have done. He says that between the time they were thrown out of Mike's Place and the time he stabbed the waiter with the pickle-fork there's a sort of gap in his memory, and he thinks it may have been then, because by that time they had got pretty confidential, and he doesn't think he would have had any secrets from him.'

At Mr Levitsky's nonchalance had vanished.

But if this fellow— What's his name?"

Mulliner.

If this fellow Mulliner sells this story to the Press, Johnny Bingley won't be worth a nickel to us. And his contract calls for two more pictures at two hundred and fifty thousand each.'

That's right.

But what are we to do?"

You tell me.'

Mr Levitsky pondered.

Well, first of all," he said, "we'll have to find out if this Mulliner really knows.'

"We can't ask him.'

"No, but we'll be able to tell by his manner. A fellow with a strangle-hold on the corporation like that isn't going to be able to go on acting same as he's always done. What sort of a fellow is he?

The ideal Nodder,' said Mr Schnellenhamer regretfully. "I don't know when I've had a better. Always on his toes. Never tries to alibi himself by saying he

had a stiff neck. Quiet—respectful—What's that word that begins with a d'?'

Damn.

Deferential. And what's the word beginning with an o'?"

Oyster'?'

'Obsequious. That's what he is. Quiet, respectful, deferential, and obsequious—that's Mulliner."

"Well, then, it'll be easy to see. If we find him suddenly not being all that—if he suddenly ups and starts to throw his weight about—why, then we'll know that he knows that Little Johnny Bingley is a midget."

"And then?"

Why, then we'll have to square him. And do it right, too. No half-measures.

Mr. Schnellenhamer tore at his hair. He seemed disappointed that he had no straws to stick in it.

"Yes," he said, the brief spasm over. "I suppose it's the only way. Well, it won't be long before we know. There's a story-conference in my office at noon, and he'll be there to nod."

We must watch him like a lynx.'

'Like a what?'

Lynx. Sort of wild cat. It watches things.

"Ah," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "I get you now. What confused me at first was that I thought you meant golf-links."

THE fears of the two magnates, had they but known it, were quite without foundation. If Wilmot Mulliner had ever learned the fatal secret, he had certainly not remembered it next morning. He had woken that day with a confused sense of having passed through some soul-testing experience, but as regards details his mind was a blank. His only thought as he entered Mr. Schnellenhamer's office for the conference was a rooted conviction that unless he kept very still his head would come apart in the middle.

Nevertheless, Mr. Schnellenhamer, alert for significant and sinister signs, plucked anxiously at Mr. Levitsky's sleeve.

Look.

'Eh?"

Did you see that?"

See what?'

"That fellow Mulliner. He sort of quivered when he caught my eye, as if with unholy glee.

He did.'

It seemed to me he did.

As a matter of fact, what had happened was that Wilmot, suddenly sighting his employer, had been unable to restrain a quick shudder of agony. It seemed to him that somebody had been painting Mr. Schnellenhamer yellow. Even at the best of times the President of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum, considered as an object for the eye, was not everybody's money. Flickering at the rims and a dull orange in colour, as he appeared to be now, he had smitten Wilmot like a blow, causing him to wince like a salted snail.

Mr. Levitsky was regarding the young man thoughtfully.

'I don't like his looks,' he said.

Nor do I," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "There's a kind of horrid gloating in his manner."

"I noticed it, too.'

"See how he's just buried his head in his hands, as if he were thinking out dreadful plots.

I believe he knows everything."

I shouldn't wonder if you weren't right. Well, let's start the conference and see what he does when the time comes for him to nod. That's when he'll break out, if he's going to.

As a rule, these story-conferences were the part of his work which Wilmot most enjoyed. His own share in them was not exacting, and, as he often said, you met such interesting people.

To-day, however, though there were eleven of the studio's weirdest authors present, each well worth more than a cursory inspection, he found himself unable to overcome the dull listlessness which had been gripping him since he had first gone to the refrigerator that morning to put ice on his temples. As the poet Keats puts it in his "Ode to a Nightingale," his head ached and a drowsy numbness pained his sense. And the sight of Mabel Potter, recalling to him those dreams of happiness which he had once dared to dream and which now could never come to fulfilment, plunged him still deeper into despondency. If he had been a character in a Russian novel, he would have gone and hanged himself in the barn. As it was, he merely sat staring before him and keeping perfectly rigid.

Most people eyeing him would have been reminded of a corpse which had been several days in the water, but Mr. Schnellenhamer thought he looked like a leopard about to spring, and he mentioned this to Mr. Levitsky in an undertone.

'Bend down," he said. "I want to whisper.

What's the matter?'

'That Mulliner. He looks to me just like a crouching leopard.

I beg your pardon," said Mabel Potter, who, her duty being to take notes of the proceedings, was seated at her employer's

side "Did you say crouching leopard or grouchy shepherd?"

Mr Schnellenhamer started. He had forgotten the risk of being overheard. He felt he had been incautious.

"Don't put that down," he said. "It wasn't part of the conference. Well, now come on, come on," he proceeded, with a pitiful attempt at the bluffness which he used at conferences, "let's get at it. Where did we leave off yesterday, Miss Potter?"

Mabel consulted her notes.

"Query—Visions," she read.

"What are you talking about?"

"That's what I've got down."

"Read the bit before that.

"'Cabot Delancy, a scion of an old Boston family, has gone to try to reach the North Pole in a submarine, and he's on an iceberg, and then you told me to put down "Query Visions."'

Mr Schnellenhamer uttered an exclamation.

Of course. Now I remember. This fellow Delancy's on an iceberg and don't know how to get off because his submarine's sunk on him, and he gets sort of delirious for want of food and the visions of his past rise before his eyes. That's where we begin. What sort of visions rise before this bird's eyes?"

An earnest young author stood up.

"Might I ask the shape of the iceberg, Mr Schnellenhamer?"

"What's that matter?"

If one is to achieve the true and the beautiful, one needs to visualize, does one not?"

"It'll be a sort of iceberg shape," said Mr Levitsky.

"Thank you," said the author, reseating himself.

Mr Schnellenhamer, who had been staring anxiously at Wilmot, who had just fallen off his chair, pulled himself together.

"Well, come on, gentlemen," he said. "Haven't any of you any ideas for visions? Why, darn it, when I was starting in the picture business, in the old silent days, an author would come across with half-a-dozen visions if you just snapped your fingers. You remember Levitsky?"

"Ah!" said Mr Levitsky. "Visions were visions then."

"Listen," whispered Mr Schnellenhamer. "Did you see Mulliner fall off his chair just now?"

"Yes," whispered Mr Levitsky. "Over-balanced, I thought."

"It wasn't because he was shaking with fiendish laughter, was it?"

"I couldn't say."

"I wish I knew," said Mr Schnellenhamer. "This suspense is awful."

ANOTHER author, a weedy young man in spectacles, who had come to Hollywood to start a Gyffte Shoppe and had been scooped up in the studio's drag-net and added to the writing-staff without quite knowing what had happened to him, said why not a scene where Cabot Delancy sees himself dressing his window with kewpie-dolls and fancy notepaper.

"Why kewpie-dolls?" asked Mr Schnellenhamer testily.

The author said they were a good selling line.

"Listen," said Mr Schnellenhamer brusquely. "This Delancy never sold anything in his life. He's a millionaire. What we want is something romantic."

A diffident old gentleman suggested a polo game.

"No good," said Mr Schnellenhamer. "Nobody cares about polo. When you're working on a picture you've got to keep in mind the small town population of the Middle West. Out in the Middle West they think polo is something you sing when you can't get anybody to join you in a duet. Aren't I right?" He paused expectantly.

"Yes," said the senior Yes-man.

"Yes," said the Vice-Yesser.

"Yes," said the junior Yes-man.

And all the Nodders nodded. Wilmot, waking with a start to the realization that duty called, hurriedly inclined his throbbing head. The movement made him feel as if a red-hot spike had been thrust through it in a diagonal direction. The agony caused him to knit his brow, and Mr Levitsky plucked at Mr Schnellenhamer's sleeve.

He scowled!

I thought he scowled, too.

As it might have been with sullen hate.

"That's the way it struck me. Keep watching him."

The conference proceeded. Each of the authors put forward a suggestion, but it was left for Mr Schnellenhamer to solve what had begun to seem an insoluble problem.

"I've got it," said Mr Schnellenhamer. "Just come to me like a flash. He sits on this iceberg and he seems to see himself—he's always been an athlete, you understand—he seems to see himself playing polo. Everybody's interested in polo nowadays. Aren't I right?"

"Yes," said the senior Yes-man.

"Yes," said the Vice-Yesser.

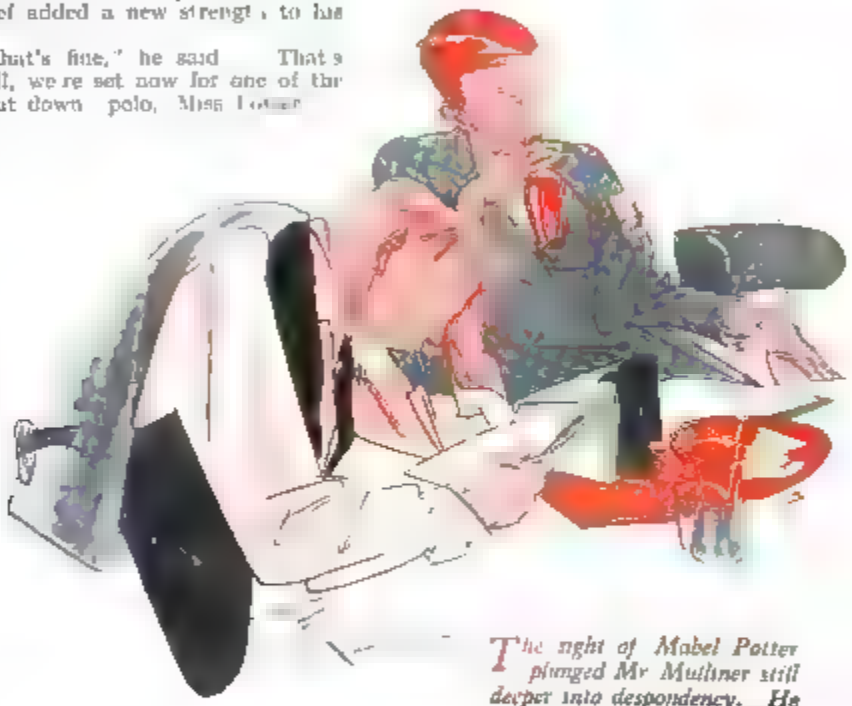
"Swell," said the junior Yes-man, a rather pushing young fellow who had a tendency to get above himself and had often had to be spoken to about gagging at conferences.

Wilmot was quicker off the mark this

time. A conscientious *employé* he did not intend to allow mere physical pain to cause him to fall short in his duty. He nodded quickly, and returned to the "ready," a little surprised to find that his head was still attached to its moorings. He had felt so certain that it was going to come off that time.

The effect of this quiet, respectful, deferential and obsequious nod on Mr. Schnellenhamer was stupendous. It seemed to him that a great crisis had passed. He was convinced now that Wilmot knew nothing. The anxious, haunted look passed from his eyes. Relief added a new strength to his voice.

"Well, that's fine," he said. "That's great. Well, we're set now for one of the visions. Put down polo, Miss Potter.



*The sight of Mabel Potter plunged Mr. Mullner still deeper into despondency. He sat staring before him, keeping perfectly rigid.*

"Pardon me," said Mabel, making a correction in her note-book. "I thought you said 'yo-yo.'"

"The other," said Mr. Schnellenhamer, because we want two, has got to be something that'll pull in the women. Something touching and sweet and tender."

The young author in spectacles thought it would be kind of touching and sweet and tender if Cabot Delancy remembered the time he was in his Gyffte Shoppe and a beautiful girl came in and their eyes met as he wrapped up her order of Indian bead-work.

Mr. Schnellenhamer banged the desk.

"What is all this about Gyffte Shoppes and Indian bead-work? Don't I tell you this guy is a prominent clubman? Where would he get a Gyffte Shoppe? Bring a girl into it, yes—so far you're talking sense. And let him gaze into her eyes—certainly he can gaze into her eyes. But not in any Gyffte Shoppe. It's got to be a lovely, peaceful old-world exterior set, with bees humming and trees waving in the breeze. Listen," said Mr. Schnellenhamer, "it's Spring, see, and all around is the beauty of Nature in the first shy sun-glow. The grass that waves. The buds that—, what's the word?

Bud?" suggested Mr. Levitsky.

"No, it's two syllables," said Mr. Schnellenhamer, speaking a little self-consciously, for he was modestly proud of knowing words of two syllables.

"Burgeon?" hazarded an author who looked like a trained seal.

"I beg your pardon," said Mabel Potter. "A burgeon is a sort of fish."

"You're thinking of sturgeon."

"Excuse it, please," said Mabel. "I'm not strong on fishes. Birds are what I'm best at."

Well, we'll have birds, too," cried Mr Schnellenhamer, jovially Stacks of birds All the birds you want Especially the cuckoo. And I'll tell you why It gives us a nice little comedy touch. This fellow's with this girl in this old-world garden where everything's burgeoning—and make a note, Miss Potter, to tell the property department that when I say burgeoning I mean burgeoning. That burgeoning's got to be done *right*—and they're locked in a close embrace. Hold this as long as the censor'll let you—maybe we'll have to save off a few feet for Pennsylvania and Ohio—and then comes your nice little comedy touch. Just as these two young folks are kissing each other without a thought of anything else in the world suddenly a cuckoo close by goes 'Cuckoo, cuckoo!' Meaning how goofy they are That's good for a laugh, isn't it?"

"Yes," said the senior Yes-man

"Yes," said the Vice-Yesser

"Chief," said the junior Yes-man, regardless of the frown of his superior officer "it's a wow!"

And then, while the Nodders heads Wilmot's among them, were trembling on their stalks preparatory to the downward swoop, there spoke abruptly a clear female voice. It was the voice of Mabel Potter and those nearest her were able to see that her face was flushed and her eyes gleaming with an almost fanatic light. It was plain that all the bird-imitator in her had sprung to sudden life.

I beg your pardon, Mr Schnellenhamer that's wrong.

A DEATHLY stillness had fallen on the room. Eleven authors sat transfixed in their chairs, as if wondering if they could believe their twenty-two ears. Mr Schnellenhamer uttered a little gasp. Nothing like this had ever happened to him before in the whole of his long experience. For a moment he seemed unable to appreciate what had occurred.

What did you say? he asked incredulously. Did you say that I—I—was wrong?

Mabel met his gaze steadily. So might Joan of Arc have faced her inquisitors.

The cuckoo" she said, "does not go 'Cuckoo, cuckoo.' It goes 'Wuckoo, wuckoo.' A distinct 'W' sound.

A gasp at the girl's temerity ran through the room. In the eyes of several of those present there was something that was not far from a tear. She seemed so young, so fragile.

All Mr Schnellenhamer's joviality had vanished. His face was a crushed-strawberry mauve, and he breathed heavily through his nose. He was plainly mastering himself with a strong effort.

So,' he said at length in a strangled voice, 'I don't know the low-down on cuckoos, don't I?

They go 'Wuckoo,'" persisted Mabel.

Listen,' said Mr Schnellenhamer, 'if I say a cuckoo goes 'Cuckoo,' it goes 'Cuckoo' and likes it.'

'Wuckoo,' corrected Mabel.

You're fired,' said Mr Schnellenhamer.

Mabel flushed to the roots of her hair.

It's unfair and unjust, she cried. I'm right, and anybody who has studied cuckoos will tell you I'm right. When it was a matter of burgeons, I was mistaken, and I admitted I was mistaken, and apologized. But when it comes to cuckoos, let me tell you that you're getting the inside stuff from somebody who has imitated the call of the cuckoo from the Coliseum, Portland, Oregon, to the Hippodrome, Sunquamset, Maine, and taken never fewer than three bows at every performance. Yes, sir, I know my cuckoos. And if you don't believe me I'll put it up to Mr Mulliner there, who was born and bred on a farm and has heard more cuckoos than a month of Sundays. Mr Mulliner, how about it? Does the cuckoo go 'Cuckoo'?

Wilmot Mulliner was on his feet, and his eyes met hers with the love-light in them. The spectacle of the girl he loved in distress and appealing to him for aid had brought my distant connexion's better self to the surface as if it had been jerked up on the end of a pin. For one brief, shameful instant he had been about to seek safety in a cowardly cringing to the side of those in power. He loved Mabel Potter madly, desperately; he had failed her at that short, sickening moment of poltroonery, but Mr Schnellenhamer was the man who signed the cheques, and the thought of risking his displeasure and being summarily dismissed had appalled him. For there is no spiritual anguish like that of the man who, grown accustomed to opening the crackling envelope each Saturday morning, reaches out for it one day and finds it no longer there. The thought of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum cashier ceasing to be a fount of gold and becoming just a man with a walrus moustache had turned Wilmot's spine to Jell-o. And for an instant, as I say, he had been on the point of betraying this sweet girl's trust.

But now, gazing into her eyes, he was strong again. Come what might, he would stand by her to the end.

No!' he thundered, and his voice rang through the room like a trumpet-blast. No, it does not go 'Cuckoo.' The bird wooks, and by heaven I shall never cease to maintain that it wooks, no matter what offence I may give to powerful vested interests. I endorse Miss Potter's view wholeheartedly and without compromise. I say the cuckoo goes 'Wuckoo!' If this be Treason, make the most of it."

There was a sudden whirring noise. It was Mabel Potter shooting through the air into his arms.

Oh, Wilmot!' she cried.

He glared over her back hair.

Wuckoo, wuckoo!" he shouted, almost savagely.

He was surprised to observe that Mr Schnellenhamer and Mr Levitsky were hurriedly clearing the room. Authors had begun to stream through the door in a foaming torrent. Yes-men and Nodders borne along in their midst like straws upon the Mississippi in flood-time. Presently he and Mabel were alone with the two magnates, and Mr Levitsky was carefully closing the door, while Mr Schnellenhamer came towards him, a winning, if nervous, smile upon his lips.

There there, Mulliner" he said.

And Mr Levitsky sa d, There, there, too

I know just how you feel, Mulliner said Mr Schnellenhamer " I don't wonder you were upset Nothing is more annoying to the man who knows than to have people making these silly mistakes. I consider the firm stand you have taken as striking evidence of your loyalty to the Corporation."

Me too," said Mr Levitsky " I was admiring t myself

For you are loyal to the Corporation, Mulliner, I know," continued Mr Schnellenhamer " You would never do anything to prejudice its interests, would you ? "

" Sure he wouldn't said Mr Levitsky

" You would not reveal any of the Corporation s little secrets thereby causing it alarm and despondency would you, Mulliner ? "

Certainly he wouldn t," said Mr Levitsky Especially now we re going to make him an executive."

An executive ? said Mr Schnellenhamer, starting.

An executive, repeated Mr Levitsky, firmly With brevet rank as a brother-in-law

Mr Schnellenhamer was silent for a moment. He seemed to be having a little trouble in adjusting his mind to this very drastic step But he was a man of sterling sense, who realized that there are times when only the big gesture will suffice.

" That s right, he said " I ll notify the legal department and have the contract drawn up right away "

That will be agreeable to you, Mulliner ? " inquired Mr Levitsky, anxiously " You will consent to become an executive ?

Wilmot Mulliner drew himself up. It was his moment His head still felt as if somebody were hitting it with a steam-hammer, and he would have been the last person to claim that he knew what all this was about. But this he did know, that Mabel was nestling in his arms and that his future was secure.

Gentlemen——" he began.

Then words failed him and he nodded.

# THE BLACK

MR DISHER inured to optical illusions though he was, and particularly by night, found that on this occasion It had gone too far By It Mr Disher meant his Presbyterian Conscience which was wont to punish his weaknesses by inflicting on him shapes, goblins, and delusions of a horrible but conventional nature But this time It had gone decidedly too far

Mr Disher was inclined to be tearful about this, and to brood self-pitifully on the succession of dirty digs he had had lately Sniffing indignantly, he had another look

"Not sporting," he said

The word gave him courage Sporting.

Mr Disher was ready to put up with a good deal Indeed, what with one thing and another he had had to put up with a great deal though perhaps with less than his friends and relations But he was not yet so resigned to dirty digs that he was prepared to acknowledge untraditional shapes.

"Not as batty as that," he said. "Birds! Is it likely?"

Thus Mr Disher did his utmost to persuade himself that what he was staring at was not the enormous, improbable, and abominable outline against the moonlight of a bird with a wing-span from tip to tip of not less than twenty feet. Flopping about Larking. Making hay in the moonlight Brr

Several birds—impossibly enormous.

Mr Disher heard them as well as saw them Great black monsters. Flop, flop. Not really good at flying they were, either You'd think they were practising Flop, flop You'd think the noise they were making would wake the natives for miles around There was a fair-sized native village not a mile away

"This is a bit thick," said Mr Disher "Birds!"

Feeling that the time had come to put a stop to this, he took a long pull at his bottle and blinked his eyes very carefully three times. Then, taking a deep breath he had another look between the trunks of the flat-topped thorns, fully expecting to see the familiar pink snakes and green elephants which had followed him from London to Port Makauna, from Port Makauna to Maiana, and from Maiana, undeterred by the conventional wild beasts of Africa, to the bush fifty miles south of Lake Anvana

But the great flopping birds were not to be exorcised so easily by the alcoholic snakes and elephants to which Mr Disher had grown quite attached

He felt lonely and frightened Flop, flop. Drat those birds!

"Shoo!" said Mr Disher, dismally "Shoo!"

They looked against the moonlight like flopping aeroplanes. Mr Disher would have been very content if he could have convinced himself that they were aeroplanes but unfortunately they gave out harsh, guttural cries which though quite unbird-like as he knew birds, were distressingly realistic as coming from these titanic vultures

"Oh, go away" said Mr Disher, "Go away"

Flop, flop.

Mr Disher gave a low, sobbing wail buried his head in the bush, and fell fast asleep

II

Now Mr Disher was the sort of man who knew a good fellow when he saw one, though when he did not see a good fellow it is probable that he knew nothing whatsoever, and could not have been expected to know what was happening in Hollywood at that time

Who did know? It is on record that in the year 1932, when poverty and bankruptcy were hurling Nordic film stars and Jewish film magnates from apartment-house windows like confetti the vast majority of Hollywood's population had resigned themselves to famine conditions. The motion-picture industry was in the red for millions of dollars. What was to be done?

It was in such times of economic distress

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# ARCHANGEL

that Mr Albert Bayfish found his true stature. Mr Albert Bayfish was production manager of United Universal Films (U U F).

U U F believed in Mr Bayfish and Mr Bayfish believed in new ideas, but with this important reservation that the older the idea, the more "sensationally" new it would appear to the public. When Mr Bayfish was confronted with suggestions for making motion-pictures based on ideas that had never been used before, he was wont to snap "The answer is in two words impossible."

The latest epic with which U U F was seeking to fend off the probable dissolution of the American motion-picture industry ("the most superb civilizing force ever known to mankind") was based on an idea so original that Mr Bayfish could not conceive why no one had thought of it since the days of Homer. The film was called "The Black Archangel" and was inspired by the attempted flight of Icarus, son of Daedalus, with the difference, of course, that under the auspices of U U F the flight came off.

All we need say here about "The Black Archangel" is that the climax of the film was reached when a tall Negro, fitted with gigantic wings that shone like ebony (but were made of canvas), was seen poised with wings gloriously outstretched on the roof of the Empire State Building in New York, the highest building in the world.

From this perilous height the winged Negro, who was seen in a close-up to be poised on his toes, dived to what would have been certain death if Mr Bayfish had been as big a fool as Icarus. The flying man, his gigantic wings outstretched and tremulous, glided down with the grace and the authority of a gull, and behold! landed on the deck of an incoming Cunard liner.

What could not be seen in the picture of course, was an autogiro aeroplane a hundred feet or so above the winged Negro which gently let him down by means of an arrangement of wires.

Mr Bayfish's surprise, when later the Negro proved to him that he had landed safely despite the fact that the wires had snapped, was instantly extinguished by an almost ecstatic admiration for American workmanship, which had constructed the flimsy painted wings so soundly that they had acted like parachutes and had prevented him, Mr Bayfish, from looking as big a fool as Icarus.

The Negro, a young man with the slender figure and the slender hands of his Masai forefathers, and whose exact counterpart could be found in any of the innumerable Masai villages, smiled in a way which helped Mr Bayfish once they were back in Hollywood to dispense with his further services.

Before the Negro left America he went to a doctor and asked him to examine the muscles in his back between shoulder blades and spine.

"Got a sprain?" said the doctor, examining him. And he was interested enough to ask the Negro to return for an X-ray photograph, but he never showed up, for he had learnt what he wanted to know.

II.

When Mr Disher awoke in the morning he felt far from well. Pressing his hands to his burning eyes, he wondered why he had ever left England. But that thought led him nowhere. He knew very well that he had left England because he had been kicked out. His aunt had seen to that.

A hearty breakfast of whisky pulled him together just a little. He would have

MICHAEL ARLEN

*Illustrated by ALFRED SINDALL*

stayed where he was for lunch, only there was no whisky left. Stumbling along between the slender trunks of the flat-topped thorns, he came to the open space where he had seen the birds. He looked about him dismally. Birds! Things had come to a pretty pass if he was going to see whacking big birds every night of his life.

'Must see a doctor,' thought Mr. Disher. Birds! A joke's a joke."

He lurched on through the bush to the edge of the native village, which he had skirted the evening before. Mr. Disher had been in Dakka for no more than a few days and knew nothing of the various tribes of natives, the Masai, the Kikuyu, the Wakamba, nor of the districts they inhabited. He had stumbled on a Masai *manyatta* (village).

Pot-bellied children stared at him with fascinated awe, and this momentary encouraged Mr. Disher. It was a long time since anyone had stared at Mr. Disher with anything but distaste. These children he decided had been unspoilt by civilization.

The village, like all *manyattas*, was a circular collection of easily demountable

huts made of cowhide and covered with mud. Mr Disher's depression returned weightily. This village did not appear to be fully equipped with the amenities of life. He looked hopelessly at the pot-bellied children. Well, this was a nice look out.

"Could any of you boys tell me," he asked, ingratiatingly, "where I could find the Mayor? I want a bath."

The tallest of the pot-bellied children opened his mouth very wide.

Mr Disher looking towards the village saw extremely undesirable women passing in and out of the huts. They appeared to take Mr Disher for granted, all except one, a wall-eyed old lady, who remembered him as his aunt and gave him a dirty look.

Then a man came out of the largest hut, shaded his eyes in Mr Disher's direction, and began to walk towards him, scattering the children as he came.

The native was naked except for a fairly clean white cloth stretching from his shoulder round his middle, but Mr Disher noted with approval that he was smoking a cigarette. Nice looking chap he was too.

"Good morning," said Mr Disher. "Glad to know you. How you keeping?"

This unexpectedly conventional form of address somehow touched Mr Disher profoundly, and he had the utmost difficulty in restraining his tears.

"I'm not so well this morning," he said unsteadily.

"Got a hangover?" said the native.

Mr Disher pulled himself together, reassuring himself that he was English and that this chap was a native even if he did speak English with an American accent.

*Two natives appeared from nowhere, collared Mr Disher, hurled him to the ground, and sat on him.*

"A touch of liver" said Mr Disher coldly Been sleeping very badly And last night I was disturbed by a lot of birds'

The tall slender Masai looked at him curiously Then he said "Come on to my hut

They walked on towards the large hut at the further end of the *manyatta*

"D you think I could have a nice bath ?" said Mr Disher

"I can give you a sort of shower I got used to a shower in Hollywood and had one rigged up here

Mr Disher was interested He had always wanted to go to Hollywood

Ever meet Greta Garbo ?' he asked eagerly

That ritzy dame ? She's so high hat she gives me a pain in the neck No, guess I'm a Marlene Dietrich fan'

' Nice legs Mr Disher commented

' Sure she's got swell legs Yessar, Marlene's my baby "

"*Is* she ?" said Mr Disher, enviously, and then remembered he was addressing a native

Thank you for your hospitality, he added coldly preceding his host into the hut

' So you saw some birds last night said the Masai quite pleasantly Big ones ?

Whoppers, said Mr Disher and then several absolutely incomprehensible things happened at once

The tall, slender native clapped his hands, uttering what sounded to his guest like a series of rude noises. Two natives, not half so clean as their chief, appeared from nowhere collared Mr Disher hurled him to the ground, wrenched his arms behind him and sat on him

Here!' said Mr Disher I say look out'

One of his captors shoved his greasy hair into poor Mr Disher's face, and it seemed to him he had had a dose of castor-oil

Going to be sick," he feebly announced and was Then his first friend" gave an abrupt order and Mr Disher, his arms tied behind him, was raised to his feet

Now look here, said Mr Disher, trying to speak reasonably What the dickens does this mean ?"

Scram " said the native and Mr Disher was hurled into a windowless and noisome little room. Bang on to the mud floor

Fountains of self-pity welled up within Mr Disher He tried to crawl to the rickety door, but his strength failed him. And his mouth was full of dust and grief and fear

Look here," he tried to shout, there seems to be a terrible misunderstanding somewhere'

BUT there was silence in the hut silence in the village silence all around Mr Disher He must have fallen asleep When he awoke the door of the noisome little room was open and from the main room of the hut an enormous bird was looking at him

Holy Moses !' said Mr Disher quickly closing his eyes again. ' Has it started again ? And I've scarcely had a drink all day'

Open your eyes nasty one, said the bird

And Mr Disher opened his eyes and before him stood the tall Masai with two great black wings attached to him Mr Disher was so relieved at this more or less natural explanation of the winged monsters he had seen that he regained his courage

' So it was you he said flopping about last night Well I'm jiggered "

" Do you know who I am nasty one ?

' A naughty fairy suggested Mr Disher and laughed heartily at what he thought was a pretty snappy joke

But the winged Negro did not laugh

" Silence he said. ' I am the angel of the Lord. And I am the sword of the Lord

" Now you're going too far said Mr Disher who—now that he was pulling the native's legs wondered how he could ever have been afraid of him Come down to facts

" You poor white trash " said the Masai " Sure I'll come down to facts You will die to-night because you have seen my elmoram learning to fly —

Your who ?' said Mr Disher

' My warriors—the warriors of the Masai the Kikuyu, the Wakamba and the Kavirondo. My generals has at last united them And when they have learnt to fly, when all the races of Africa have learnt to fly, then we, the oppressed black races, shall scourge the white man and drive him out of our lands, and we shall follow him to his lands even across the seas, and we shall punish him with fire and sword for the crimes he has committed against the sons of Ham

' Look here," said Mr Disher " you pulling my leg ?"

Why should I mock a man already dead

Now the curious fact to be noted here is that Mr Disher to his own infinite surprise was not in the least frightened Perhaps this was because he had not had a drink since dawn, or perhaps this was due to a defiant feeling that here at last he was face to face with the dirtiest of a long series of

*"You poor white trash!" said the winged Negro. "You will die to-night because you have seen my warriors learning to fly."*

dirty dogs and something had to be done about it

'Well,' he said, 'if I'm about to die I might as well give you some advice. Take off those flea-bitten wings of yours and sit down.'

And Mr Disher, speaking with the fluency of one who has nothing to lose and everything to gain, won dominion over the Masai's attention, so that he gravely hitched up his shoulders and his great wings with them, and sat down and listened very patiently.

## IV

THE Poots had a farm on the south side of Lake Aivana, a couple of hours' motor run from Maiana. After long deliberation as to what would be a nice name for their settlement, they had finally decided on a familiar and useful household commodity and had christened it 'Pommery'.

Charley Poot also held the honourable rank of Captain in the recently organised Dakka Defence Reserve. The D.D.R. as apart from the King's African Rifles, which are black troops officered by Englishmen holding His Majesty's commission, is a volunteer force entirely composed of white settlers and residents.

The Poots come into this story only because Mr Disher was their guest, though he had apparently forgotten that fact by going out for a walk one evening after dinner and not returning. The principal conversation between Mr Disher and the Poots was a sentimental one. Lily Poot's only brother had been killed in the War and Mr Disher had been his best friend.

They had been persuaded to invite Mr Disher to come out and stay with them at Pommery by the urgent persistence of his friends and relatives in London, who had decided that it was preferable for Mr Disher to go to the dogs in Dakka [illegible] than in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly. [illegible]ing Mr Disher had explained to his easy-going host and hostess that he had had a spot of trouble [illegible]n London, and he had vaguely put this down not so much to the immediate consequences of gambling and alcoholic poisoning as to the profound and lasting consequences of having been left an orphan at an early age.

Mrs Poot said to her husband: "Being left an orphan at the age of seven seems a pretty poor excuse for stealing and pawning your aunt's pearls at the age of thirty-five to pay card debts with, poor little beast, but after all he was Reggie's best friend and we may as well do what we can for him. But mind and tell the servants to keep the whisky out of the way. Chablis and beer he may have, but not hard liquor. And no champagne, Charley. Poor little beast!'

But Mr Disher, who always prided himself on knowing a thing or two (but would have been mortified if one had said he knew two at most), had somehow or other collared two bottles of whisky and one of gin and disappeared. Search was made for him, of course, but not with excessive tenacity. The Poots agreed that Mr Disher, if he hadn't broken his neck before, would turn up in Maiana sooner or later in search of manly refreshment.

The Principal Medical Officer of Dakka, who liked an occasional change from the evening gossip at the Maiana Club and would once in a while come up to Pommery for a week-end, on his next visit agreed with his host and hostess that Mr Disher, whom he didn't know and didn't want to, might just as well be left to work out his own destiny. This was ten days after Mr Disher's disappearance.

The P.M.O. had other things to think about, as had all the other officials at Maiana. Over the dinner-table Lily and Charley Poot listened with incredulous interest to what he had to say.

It appeared that in the last week not a night had passed but that some settler's house or farm had been burnt to the ground. And in widely different parts of the country.

'Set on fire,' the P.M.O. explained in his quiet voice. 'Curious, isn't it? This last week, of course, there has been no moon. But who's doing it? We're having no trouble with the natives. We're having no trouble with anyone. Who's doing it, and what for? Not that it's any of my business—I'm no policeman. But it's the kind of thing that distracts a man's mind from working out cross-word puzzles—or isn't it?'

Charley Poot said: "But how's it done, Ian? D'you mean to say that someone, black or white, just walks up to some poor chump's house in the watches of the night and sets it on fire and walks away again?'

'Might be your turn next, Charley. Pommery would burn nicely. They dropped a bomb on Kelvaiga last night. Still that might have been done by someone who didn't like the new secretary of that exclusive country club. Anyhow, the bomb didn't go off—the only one that hasn't so far.'

'Bomb?' said Poot. "Did you say bomb, Ian?'

'Fire-bomb," said the P.M.O. "Curious, isn't it? A quite modern and up-to-date. Made in Chicago.'

'And dropped from the air,' said Poot, 'by aeroplane?'

"Well," said the P.M.O., "we are thought of that. They're dropped from the sky all right. But aeroplanes make a noise—or don't they?"

"Yes, they do," said Charley Pool. "And shut up being funny when I'm asking you questions."

"Who's being funny?" said the P.M.O. "I'm in a reflective mood, that's all. All I want to know, and all anyone wants to know from the Commissioner down to the pimpliest young E.P.C. is how these fire-bombs are dropped unless it's by the latest thing in balloons, but they can't be balloons because balloons are sizable objects and can't be disguised as tiepins during the day—or can they?"

"They can't and they're not," said Mr. Disher, walking in from the veranda. "I mean to say, they're not balloons."

"Hello, Dishy," said Charley Pool. "What would you like first, a shave or a drink?"

"I'm not drinking," said Mr. Disher. "The Disher brain has come into its own at last. If you won't think I'm rude, Lily, I'd like to say a word to these two chaps."

And Mr. Disher's sudden reappearance had been so surprising, and his lean frame and clear eyes and straggling beard and serious manner were so surprising, that there was no smile whatsoever in the silence that followed. And Mrs. Pool, who was not the less attractive for knowing when she was not wanted, left the men to their important trifles.

V

WHEN at last Mr. Disher, curiously free from those guttural hesitations which come from too many cigarettes and drinks between meals, had finished speaking, Charley Pool said thoughtfully—

"Look here, Dishy, is this—on the square?"

Mr. Disher's answer was to fill a tumbler with soda-water.

The P.M.O., smiling, turned to Charley Pool. "Does he have to drink that beastly stuff to prove he has not been having alcoholic nightmares?" He turned to Mr. Disher. "One thing you haven't yet told us, Mr. Disher, is how this Masai from Hollywood manages to fly under his own power. We can conceive a man gliding down from a height with the help of wings, but it's another matter to believe that he can *rise* from the ground. What's the secret?"

"It's a fluke," said Mr. Disher. "And that's about all any white man will ever know about it. When I say it's a fluke I mean that the fellow by accident found that he had certain muscles or tendons between his shoulder blades and his spine which, when developed, could agitate wings with almost as much power and speed as a gull's. The arms and hands are used scarcely at all, though you'd think they were to use them in flight. It's these peculiar muscles between the shoulders that work the trick."

The P.M.O. turned to Charley Pool.

"Better make up your mind to believe our friend, Charley. I've been puzzled before now by a certain muscle formation quite unknown in whites, among some of the natives—but not all."

"That's our chap's difficulty," said Mr. Disher. "Actually about only one in twenty have them. So he's had to give up his dream of sweeping the skies with hordes upon hordes of winged blacks. And he's faced with another difficulty—fear. This flying business frightens the life out of the natives, and so far he hasn't been able to train more than twenty-two. But even one flying man on a moonless night with a gun or a bomb in his hands, is pretty dangerous—as has been proved already."

"Dishy," said Pool very quietly, "when as you've told us this fellow was going to have you killed—what did you tell him and what did you promise to do for him that not only made him alter his decision but take you into his confidence?"

"I thought," said Mr. Disher slowly, "that you would ask that question."

"We are waiting for an answer, Dishy."

"Ask yourselves," said Mr. Disher, his eyes fixed intently on nothing whatsoever, "what a man like me—who, let's face it, is a pretty septic cad—would do when threatened with death in such circumstances. I think you can supply the answer."

After a long silence Charley Pool said, slowly, "So in exchange for your life you promised to give him the benefit of your advice as to the best and quickest means of driving us—your people—out of Dakka."

"That's right," said Mr. Disher. "His idea was to raid Masana bang off—annihilation of Government House, Secretariat, Masana. I persuaded him that his best move was first to cause a state of unrest and alarm by setting fire to farms in widely different districts—and then, when he had trained enough fliers in these small expeditions, to try something worth while. The raid on Masana is fixed for the night after to-morrow night."

"So now you're betraying them, are you, Dishy?"

"That's right," said Mr. Disher. "But double-cross is the word—it sounds better. You'd better collect a few men and raid them to-morrow just after sunset. Only you'll first have to promise me one thing."

The P.M.O. said, "One moment, Mr.

Disher. This is none of my business, of course, but as the only official present I must take it on myself to represent the Commissioner of Police. You have told us quite enough to make you liable for immediate arrest on the charge of treason, and I am afraid we can promise you nothing. What we want from you now is the locality of the *manyatta* which these chaps are using as their base, so that I can telephone Mataua right away, and if necessary a detachment of the K.A.R. can be sent there before dawn to clean up the mess.

Mr. Disher said: "You will get nothing more out of me until I have a definite promise that these chaps are not shot down. Take their wings from them and give them a lesson, by all means. But they're frightened to death of the whole business as it is, and only held together by their leader. They are no more than a bunch of children. Once you get the leader they'll be only too glad to give up the whole show."

The P.M.O. glanced at his watch. It was half-past two. He said: "It's later than I thought—too late, I'm afraid, to get anything going to-night. Charley, if Mr. Disher will give us his word not to escape you might let him have a bed for a few hours."

Mr. Disher smiled queerly. "Escape? Where the hell am I going to escape to? Having given my black friends the slip I gather my white friends are just pining for a touch of the old Disher charm."

"That will do, Mr. Disher. I shall drive you into Mataua at seven in the morning."

But at a little after seven in the morning it was with his host that the P.M.O. started to drive into Mataua, for Mr. Disher had lived up to his reputation and decamped, taking with him the service revolver which Charley Pool had recently bought to mark his rank in the Dakka Defence Reserve.

The P.M.O. said grimly: "A flying detachment guided by an aeroplane can't help but find that *manyatta* within twenty-four hours. But that would be too late."

Pool said: "Too late? Why? He said the raid was set for to-morrow night—that gives us plenty of time."

"I've got an idea," said the P.M.O., "that Mr. Disher's boy friend isn't the fool we take him for. Disher escaped from him to warn us—but suppose he was allowed to escape—and suppose the raid was really fixed for to-night."

## VI

NO one knows to this day how the news got about so quickly. Throughout that afternoon there was a state of pleasurable excitement in and about Mataua. Good humour all round was engendered by the idea of a flying man, and the irreverent among the young went about asking each other how some of their elders and betters would look attached to a nice pair of wings before their time.

The attitude of His Excellency the Governor was also irreverent, but, of course, on the grand scale. What His Excellency said in conference with the Colonial Secretary, Colonel Hand of the K.A.R., the Commissioner of Police, and the P.M.O., who was permitted to attend the Executive Council because he had brought the news boiled down to this—it was probably all my eye.

"That's all very well, sir," said Colonel Hand, "but what about the fires we've been having?"

His Excellency the Governor gave it as his opinion for what it was worth that the recent firing of settlers' houses was probably the work of Kikuyu houseboys who had been dismissed. However, just in case the whole thing wasn't all my eye, precautionary measures had better be taken.

"But," said the Governor, "don't kill anybody if you can help it—or even if you can't help it. For all we know there may be an international law against killing fellows with wing attachments. You never know."

"Then what, sir, do you suggest?" asked Colonel Hand bitterly. "That we make a gallant stand on the housetops and shout 'Bo' at them?"

"Now don't get petulant," pleaded the Governor. "Probably one aeroplane will be quite enough to scatter the silly fellows—if there *are* any such silly fellows."

The Commissioner of Police rose to his feet.

"Well, sir, I'll have to be going. What have we decided?"

His Excellency looked surprised.

"Decided? We have decided, my dear fellow, to—to——"

"To watch developments," said the Colonial Secretary, bitterly.

Exactly," said His Excellency, turning to Colonel Hand. "My wife asked me to remind you, my dear fellow, that she is expecting you for bridge this afternoon."

## VII

BY ten o'clock that night only the most tentative plans for defence had been made against the possibility of attack by the flying men. What made the organization of any real defence impossible in so short a time was the fact that, from the Governor downwards, no one could be persuaded to believe in the existence of any flying men.

But offers of advice and assistance were

*He tore along in the darkness, with the great Negro, wings outstretched high over his shoulders, sitting astride the fuselage and trying to throttle him.*

not wanting, particularly from the young who owned aeroplanes.

At that time there were six aeroplanes in hangars on the Matana Field, all privately owned, two by ladies, for ladies are very progressive in Dakka and remain young for ever. Their young owners, particularly the two lady owners, were ready for anything at any time from flying Dutchmen to flying Negroes. They had been saying that all day and were repeating it at eleven o'clock that night to Colonel Hand who, with some others of the elder statesmen, were sitting rather vacantly in the main hangar, when the telephone rang.

It was Charley Pool from Pommery, whither he had returned that afternoon on finding that Matana was laughing at him and the P.M.O. for having let Mr. Disher work a snappy leg-pull on them.

"Hello?" said the Colonel. "Pool? What's that?"

"With reference" began Charley Pool, who appeared to be enjoying himself, "to those winged natives who gave you all such a hearty laugh to-day."

"Come to the point, man. What about them?"

"Well, I thought it would interest you to know that they have just passed over here."

"See them?" snapped the Colonel.

"Too dark for that. But I heard them. Their wings seem to make quite a flopping noise. You'd better buck up, Colonel, if you want to collar them."

"Do they fly fast?"

"I wouldn't know. But I don't think so, as I heard their wings for quite a time. You may have half an hour."

Within fifteen minutes twenty cars filled with officers and men of the K.A.R. were leaving Matana towards Lake Aivana. Their instructions were to stop ten miles out of Matana, scatter wait, and capture anything with wings except birds.

Two young settlers, Ackroyd and Mackie, were chosen from the aeroplane owners to go up and scare the winged men down to earth. The lady owners kicked up an awful row at not being chosen, and had to be soothed with stimulants up at Kelvaiga Club until a late hour.

Ackroyd's was a Puss Moth and Mackie's an Avro, and they were both first-class night pilots. Colonel Hand's idea was that the noise of the machines would scare the natives and they would either fall or run.

But it was poor young Mac who fell first. It is probable that he never knew why. When, later that night, they found the burnt wreck of his Avro, what was left of Mackie was pinned beneath, and what was left of a winged native was twined horribly round the blades of the propeller.

Ackroyd saw young Mac crash, though he did not see why. Then he saw the flames below. Ackroyd said later that he couldn't tell whether he was more scared than angry, but he did know that he wanted to kill something immediately.

First thing he did was to put his Moth's nose up. Mac must have collided with one of the flying blokes, and Ackroyd felt he'd be taking fewer chances if he flew high and came down on them.

He couldn't foresee what happened next. No one alive could have foreseen that.

It has to be remembered that so far Ackroyd hadn't seen one of the winged men. He was going too fast to be able to pick them out on a dark night. His only hope was that they could see and hear him easily enough, and that they'd be scared to the ground.

HE was circling at a thousand feet and wondering about young Mackie, when he felt hands at his throat.

Ackroyd said later that he would never again disbelieve the old story about able-bodied men dying from shock. When a fellow is flying solo and damn well knows he's flying solo it's not pleasant for him to feel a pair of hands digging at his tonsils. First he doesn't believe they can be hands, and when he knows they *are* hands he wants urgently to slide into another and better-run world.

Ackroyd said he let out a yell like a film star asked to play in a silent picture. He didn't care what happened to him, whether he crashed or not, so long as he could see what those hands belonged to, if anything. There was no doubt but that they meant business. Ackroyd let the stick go hang and tried to tear the throttling hands away. But the position he was in gave him no play. Then he managed to twist his head round just enough to catch a glimpse of what was biting him.

Ackroyd said he felt better on seeing the thing was human, but not much. Tearing along in the darkness with a great sweating grinning Negro, with wings stretching high over his shoulders, sitting astride his fuselage and trying to throttle him was enough to give anyone the jitters.

The whole thing must have been over in two minutes. Ackroyd feeling he must pass out in another second, grabbed the stick again—and couldn't help feeling sorry for the poor winged devil behind him. Then he looped.

The native in falling, must have been just flicked by the propeller. Ackroyd said the scream he heard was somehow like a baby's. All the maimed native's wings did for him in falling was to let him

down gently enough to give him a fair long run for his money.

That was the end of the raid of winged men. One white man and two natives killed and twenty natives driven down in helpless terror by the noise of the aeroplanes and captured. It was only some hours later, after long and patient questioning, that Colonel Hand gathered from the prisoners that their leader had escaped.

VIII

THE reconstruction of Mr Disher's first discovery of the flying men has been made possible from what he himself told Charley Pool and the P.M.O. But we have no adequate means of knowing what happened to him from the time he escaped from Pommery to the late afternoon of the day following the raid, when the vultures had to be scared away from his body.

Mr Disher and the Masai leader were found in the bush two miles from the *manyatta*. They lay close together. All day boys had sat as near as they dared to the bodies to keep the vultures away, and so little harm had come to them. Colonel Hand was very perplexed at the expression which death had surprised on their faces.

When a flying detachment of the K.A.R., guided by one of the prisoners, rushed the *manyatta*, such of the warriors as had not taken part in the raid had taken refuge in the bush. But from the narratives of the old men and women, Colonel Hand was able to establish two facts: that nothing more was to be feared from the Masai leader who had come from America to disturb and destroy his countrymen; and, that Mr Disher, but for whose warning Masana might have been burnt to the ground, would never be arrested for treason.

It appeared that Mr Disher, on returning to the *manyatta*, and finding that the Masai had anticipated the raid by one night, had shown every sign of being very angry. And when certain of the *elmoran* had sought to capture and ill-treat him for a traitor, he had shot at and wounded two; but only slightly. He had terrorized the whole village with his revolver, and had generally behaved like a man in love with trouble of every description. And he had refused all food and drink, never moving from his squatting position which commanded the whole *manyatta*, the revolver on his lap.

Many hid themselves in the bush, fearful of the uproar following the return of the winged warriors. Would the white madman try to fight the winged warriors under their leader, the bravest of the brave?

But when in the dawn the bravest of the brave returned, he came alone and he came on foot, his wings drooping wearily from his shoulders and dragging along the ground. And all those remaining in the *manyatta* had their faces in grief and fear so that it was as though the warrior and the white madman were alone.

The tale went that for some time they looked at one another without speaking, and then the warrior spoke angry words, pointing to the white man's weapon and baring his breast. And the people held their breaths, but the white man answered calmly and remained motionless where he sat on the ground.

Then the Masai leader very wearily threw himself down nearby, as though he cared for nothing more in this world, but he roused himself on hearing a sudden small noise. Mr Disher had thrown his revolver over the huts into the flat-topped thorns.

Then the watching natives saw the two men, whom they had been accustomed to see as friends before the white man's escape, put their heads together in earnest discussion. And then they heard them laugh, and this laughter at that time was not a good thing to hear. Whereupon the Masai leader arose and strode with firm steps to one of the old men and said —

Your sons and your nephews and your kin will be returned to you unharmed by the white men, for they are wise and know the blame is with the leader. They will be here to-day searching for me, but I shall be gone, and the white stranger shall go with me. We gave him his life and in return he has betrayed us, for his duty lay with his people. He has returned here because his treachery is heavy on him, and because he has no honour among his own people, and because he says that of all men he loves only me although he tried to destroy me. And because we are both outcasts we shall go away together, the betrayed and the betrayer, and we shall find peace together.

But how will you go? They will find you before sunset.

We shall fly, he on my back. They will not find us.

How can you fly with such a burden? You are exhausted. You will fall.

The tall Masai laughed the same laugh with which he and the white madman had already frightened them.

Of course we shall fall. That is the history and the destiny of men.

So it was in this way it came about that when Colonel Hand found them in the bush the faces of the broken bodies were smiling as though life really was the funny thing people are always saying it is. And it must have seemed a very funny thing indeed to Mr Disher, for the only decent action he had ever done was to betray the only man who had ever trusted him.

# THE BRIGHT OF THE

THEY are very bright and very young. No corporation in the country can boast a more youthful staff than the B.B.C. Less than a fifth of those employed at Broadcasting House are over forty. The retiring age at which B.B.C. *employés* receive their pension is sixty-five. Most of them have thirty years to wait, many of them more than forty.

Eleven years ago there was no such thing as broadcasting or a broadcaster. Scornful critics, notably disgruntled musicians, newspapermen and educationists, have a way of referring to the Bright Young Men of the B.B.C. as "those amateurs." This charge is ridiculous. In ten years the Bright Young Men have hammered themselves, by hard work and bitter experience, into a body of experienced professionals, professional broadcasters. Every year, as broadcasting enlarges its scope, a dozen or so newcomers are added to their ranks. They come from various professions—actors, musicians, soldiers, sailors, engineers, lawyers, and poultry farmers—and within six months they belong firmly to one profession—the ultra-modern, up-to-date profession of broadcasting.

Very little is known publicly about the Bright Young Men. Personal publicity is discouraged at Broadcasting House. Occasionally one of the B.Y.M. will write a film, publish a book, have a play staged. He then comes into the public eye as a successful author and dramatist, but as a broadcaster he must remain obscure. Certain members of

*At the Dramatic Control Panel: Val Gielgud, the Productions Director, supervising the broadcasting of a radio-play, with Saunders Jacobs at the controls, and Denis Freeman an interested spectator.*

# YOUNG MEN B. B. C.

## RAYMOND PRICE

the B.B.C. staff such as conductors and dramatic producers, have their names tacked on to their work—yet to the general public they remain merely names—Val Gielgud, Joseph Lewis, Stanford Robinson, John Watt, Peter Creswell, Victor Hely-Hutchinson, Lance Sieveking, Howard Rose, Edward Clark. They are the most frequently printed names in the country, but nothing is known about their owners. Photographs of them never appear in the *Radio Times*, are never sent out to the newspapers. This obscurity does not worry the Bright Young Men, they are far too busy working away in the great Tower of 1,000,000 blue bricks which houses the twenty-two studios of the B.B.C.

Publicity of the "Miss So-and-So *adores* her dogs" order may be valuable to actresses and footballers, in helping them to advance to better jobs, the Bright Young Men have very little hope, any of them, of better jobs. In a corporation where most of the staff have no prospect of retiring for thirty years, promotion is slow. Some of them may leave to take up new posts in other businesses, but there are no broadcasting posts for them outside the B.B.C. The tragedy of their lives is that they work for a monopoly. There is no other broadcasting organization in the country to bid for their services or stimulate their work with competition.

The life of the broadcaster is not all jam. He may have to work for weeks upon a single hour's programme which, once broadcast, vanishes literally, into thin air.

Let us proceed to introduce ourselves to some of the Bright Young Men who are responsible for turning out 65,000 transmitter hours of entertainment every year. We might begin with the Productions Department, the members of which are, on the whole, younger and brighter than the rest.

*John Watt, whose "Songs from the Shows" were among the most successful light programmes of 1932*

The Productions Department at Broadcasting House has charge of all plays, revues, musical comedies, vaudeville, television, and the recording of programmes for circulation through the Empire. To see this

department in action we should visit the Productions studios on Floors 6 and 7 at twelve o'clock in the morning when rehearsals of a complicated radio play are in full swing. Seven studios are reserved at Broadcasting House for plays alone, another two for vaudeville and television.

Why seven, you may ask, when there is never more than one play "on the air" at the same time? The answer is that a modern wireless play, with its complicated technique of "fading" and 'crossfading,' its sound effects and musical backgrounds, may demand the use of all seven studios—and more.

Carnival" used seven studios, so did 'Exiles.' Several studios may be needed for the actors alone, so that the voices of one group of speakers may be 'faded out" and those of another group in a different studio be faded in" on top of them. The orchestra must be 'faded,' too, so that requires a studio of its own. There may be other music—a barrel organ, an accordionist, a singer or choir.

Further to these, a studio may be required that is artificially supplied with "echo,' so that words spoken in it, though it is only twelve feet square, may give the effect of being shouted in the Albert Hall or Olympia, or across an Alpine valley (as in "Flags on the Matterhorn"). This artificial "echo" is achieved by passing the output of the studio through a loud-speaker into an empty reverberating room and picking it up again through a microphone at the far end of the room. Lastly two studios at least may be needed for 'sound effects'—two studios for the now obvious reason that sounds to be cross-faded cannot come from the same microphone.

The microphones in all these studios are connected with a room far away upstairs which contains the instrument known as the Dramatic Control Panel. This switchboard, adorned with numerous knobs and switches and red lights, is the nerve centre of the radio play. Before it sit the two producers—the Chief Producer following from his script every word of the play as it comes to him from a loud-speaker, the assistant producer operating according to his chief's orders the knobs which "fade" the studios "up" and "down" and the switches which, by flashing green cue-lights in the studios, warn the actors and effects men when it is time to speak their lines, play their music or operate their horses' hooves. By this robot is the radio play patchworked together.

On the day of our visit the Productions Director himself is in charge of the rehearsal. His name is Val Gielgud. He is better known to the public than most of the Bright

By courtesy of the B.B.C.

*The new Effects Studio in Broadcasting House. The table top is panelled in six different surfaces for imitating the sound of hooves on roads, grass, sand, stone, and bridges.*

Young Men because he happens to be both a novelist and a playwright. Most of his stories are about Poles and Poland. His grandfather was a Lithuanian Pole and his great-great-grandfather a famous but inefficient Polish general.

Val Gielgud looks like a Pole—or at least a Slav of some nationality. He has black hair, high cheek bones, a small black beard and a monocle. He has a weakness for cats. His office walls are adorned with Fujita etchings of cats and photographs of various prize Siamese which he has owned.

He inherits his histrionic ability through his mother, a niece of the late Ellen Terry. He has been an actor in his time but now leaves that side of the business to his famous brother John, who does it a great deal better. He makes a great pose of being reactionary, and carries off a romantic swagger quite creditably with the aid of the beard, the monocle, a black hat, a black cloak (in the evenings) and a sword stick.

While running from Savoy Hill to catch a bus, he once lost the sheath of the sword stick and found himself being whirled down the Strand carrying a naked rapier! A policeman who had picked up the stick collared it as lost property and made the owner accompany him to Bow Street to put in a formal claim to it. Mr Gielgud walked the whole way with his sword concealed behind his back where the policeman could not see the illegal weapon. It is to his credit that he managed to do this without losing his dignity!

He once wrote a play, "The Double Man" in collaboration with the Editor of the *Radio Times*. This play was first produced by the B.B.C. staff's Amateur Dramatic Society. The authors tried hard to get Sir John Reith to play the leading part, that of a society drug trafficker. The Director-General refused—possibly on moral grounds. Sir John does, however, appear in his staff's plays. His most notable appearance was as Mr Stilbottle, the beery broker's man in "Tilly of Bloomsbury," in which he hiccupped his way through the evening with enormous verve—greatly to the delight of his subordinates!

Alongside Mr Gielgud sits Mr Saunders Jacobs, whose job it is actually to manipulate the robot. He has been doing this, day in day out, for four years. His script of the play is a hieroglyph of coloured pencil marks. "Fade up 7C," "Fade down 6B," "Cut out orchestra," "Cue for shot from 6A," and so on. In a complicated modern radio play he is kept busy for every second of seventy-five minutes. He is the player for should his hand falter on the knobs and switches Miss G's big

*The old Effects Studio at Savoy Hill, with its somewhat makeshift devices for producing "noises off". Bryan Michie, who controls the Effects Department, is the figure in shirt-sleeves.*

By courtesy of the B.B.C.

# The Bright Young Men of the B.B.C.

speech will fade away to inaudibility, Mr B.'s tirade be drowned by the orchestra, and a squadron of horses' hooves gallop across a scene in a suburban drawing-room. The strain of doing this weird and responsible job is tremendous. Mr Jacobs's hair is thinning and he wears a permanently worried look.

So much for the Dramatic Control Panel. It is the loom which weaves into a pattern the raw material of seven different studios. The supply of this raw material is in the hands of two other Bright Young Men. They are known officially as the Studio Manager and the Chief of the Effects Section.

The Studio Manager is a Scotsman, Donald Munro, an import from the B.B.C. studios at Aberdeen. His job is sheer organization—and it is lucky for him that he comes of a race of organizers. Only part of his work has to do with actual broadcasting. His main duty is that of allotting the nine studios under his command among the various producers of plays, revues, vaudeville, television, etc., as well as managing rehearsals, auditions and transmissions, and the recording of programmes by the Blattnerphone process. The "high spot" in the career of this stout genius was the B.B.C.'s recent Tenth Birthday celebrations, for which he had to accommodate, and see to the smooth running of, one hundred and sixty hours of rehearsal in one week.

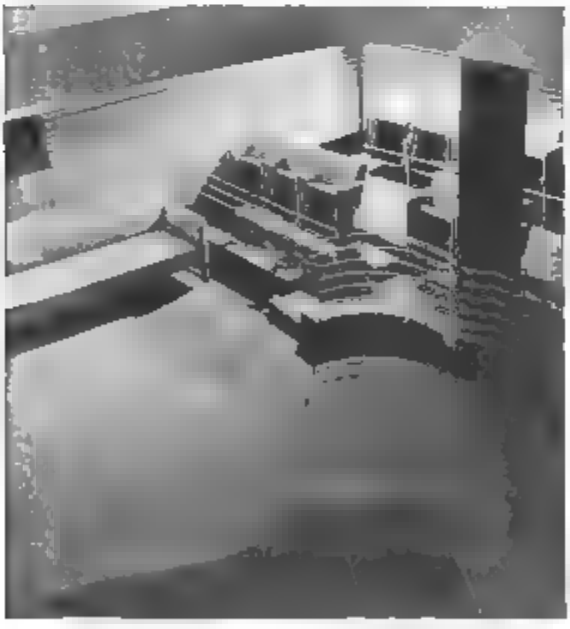
Donald Munro's reputation for sangfroid is equalled by that of Bryan Michie, O.C. of the Effects Studios. He is known to thousands of broadcasters simply as "Michie" and most of them believe that it is his Christian name. Michie stands six feet six, weighs sixteen stone, and has the brightest red hair in London. Five years ago he was an L.C.C. teacher, then he went on the stage, beginning with a small part in "Beau Geste" at His Majesty's. The only time Michie was ever known to be roused from his Buddha-like calm was when Basil Dean cut his few "lines" out of the play. He then threw such a temperament that the producer hastily put the lines back.

Michie's castle is the main Effects Studio, a two-storey apartment that looks like a power house in one of Fritz Lang's fantastic films of the future. Two pot-bellied glass and steel compartments, one above the other, contain a dozen gramophone turntables for the records of music and sound effects which can be woven into the play by the Panel upstairs.

An oval table, its top divided into six different surfaces (felt, metal, wood, etc.) is used for making the various sounds of hooves (horses on roads, grass, sand, stones, metal bridges, etc.). Scattered about are the "instruments of torture" which produce wind, thunder, motor engines, pistol shots, and so on, while a tank of water is handy for noises of rowing, swimming, splashing.

In a far corner of the room is the barrel organ which has figured in so many radio plays. This respectable instrument was once almost the death of our Mr. Michie. It was his job to turn the handle, following the course of the play on headphones. The lead of the headphones inadvertently became caught up in the handle and, as he turned, Michie found the flex growing shorter and shorter. He could neither stop playing nor remove the phones. Eventually his head was drawn right down to the handle and went spinning round with it. He was found later, inextricably lashed to the barrel organ and almost perishing from strangulation.

In four years Michie has made himself an accepted expert on



*A view from the balcony of the studio which is used for vaudeville and similar broadcasts.*

By courtesy of the B.B.C.

*What the listener does not (at present) see. The popular White Coons Concert Party (Harry Pepper at the piano), photographed whilst putting a number "on the air"*

Sound Effects. Gramophone companies, film magnates, theatre producers, foreign broadcasters, all come to him for advice. He spends much of his very little spare time in listening to sounds and trying to reproduce them artificially. A railway station he creates with the aid of a tin bath, a roller skate, whistles, and a cylinder of compressed air. (Try this at home!) The sound of eggs frying is reproduced by pouring fruit salt into water and holding the glass close to the mike. Footsteps come from scratching silver paper, and heart beats (one of the biggest puzzles ever set Mr. Michie) from a squeezed sponge. The sound of a liner crashing on to an iceberg is made by crumpling a matchbox close to the microphone. Shots come from a pad of American cloth struck with a thin cane. These are only a few of his secrets. There are many more—and he guards them jealously.

Another "star turn" of the Productions Department is Lance Sieveking. He, like Michie, stands six feet six. The B.B.C. runs to length in its staff. Sir John Reith is six feet seven, and Mr. de Lotbiniere, a new recruit to Talks, six feet eight.

Sieveking was a distinguished R.N.A.S. pilot during the War. Some people wonder however he managed to fit into an aeroplane—but he did, and has a string of decorations to prove it. He dresses like a dandy though in the strangest styles. His hat is black, his shirts green, his shantung ties patterned like wallpaper. He is one of the few Londoners who still affect a straw "boater" and tussore coat in the summer.

The name of Sieveking has been attached to more than thirty wireless productions. Some of them—such as "Kaleidoscope," "The Pursuit of Pleasure," and "The Wheel of Time"—have been popular fare; the rest, though obviously original and sincere work, must have passed right over the heads and tastes of the average listener. Lance Sieveking is a godson of G. K. Chesterton. He shares his godfather's affection for the fantastic and the paradoxical, neither of which can be called ideal ingredients for popular entertainment. However he is undergoing at the moment a change of heart, having abandoned "creative originality" in favour of "non-stop vaudeville." His colleagues are wondering a little nervously what this great thinker will make of vaudeville!

Eustace Robb, the television producer, is a newcomer to Broadcasting House. He was formerly a Guards officer, then went into the gramophone trade. His job is

# The Bright Young Men of the B.B.C.

By courtesy of the B.B.C.

*Another view of the strikingly modernistic Vaudeville Studio designed by Raymond McGrath. There is a waiting list of over two thousand for seats at vaudeville performances.*

not yet a particularly important one, for television is still in its infancy and the public which 'looks in' on Mr Robb's four programmes a week cannot amount at most to more than a few thousands. Mr Robb himself however is not in the least abashed by the smallness of his public. He has set out to make Television Studio BB the most amusing place in Broadcasting House—and succeeding.

He has built a vast television screen, laid down a black-and-white check floor (black and white, he finds, are the colours that televise best), experimented deeply with make-up (dull pink skins, blue lips, eyelids and cheekbones). His programmes in the last few months have included a performing seal, a performing ape, a troupe of Japanese jiu-jutsuists, a caricaturist, a shadowgrapher, a palmist, several dancers, two famous violinists, a trick cyclist, a fashion parade, a collection of champion greyhounds, a pavement artist, a memory man, and some physical culture.

The introduction of costume and make-up has struck a new note at Portland Place. Some of the staider members of the Governing body (and they *are* staid) are said to have been shocked by the notion of scantily clad and heavily painted dancing girls running in and out of the dressing-rooms in their sacred basement. Mr Robb, however, keeps on keeping on. He is a wise young man to put such energy and originality into his experiments. The chances are that he is laying the foundations of the broadcasting of the future.

The list of B.B.C. producers includes also the names of Peter Creswell, John Watt, and Denis Freeman.

Peter Creswell has given us not only conventional productions of stage plays such as "Pompey the Great" and "As You Like It," but also such purely radio pieces as "Carnival" and "Matinée." "Carnival" was to the minds of many people the finest radio play to date. It was distinguished by its many scenes crowded with characters, music, and what may be termed 'atmosphere.' That is Creswell's greatest gift, the creation of "atmosphere." He uses voices, music, and

" effects " to paint pictures such as the birthday party scene in " Carnival," the shipboard scene in " Mary Celeste " the *fiesta* sequence in his own gallant, though top-heavy, adaptation of Conrad's " Romance " In appearance he is short and dark. He always wears an orchid and spends his holidays cruising in battleships.

Like many broadcasters John Watt was formerly a journalist. Newspaper men generally make good broadcasters, because they know by experience what ordinary people want and how it should be given to them. Watt came to London from the Belfast Station where, as Dramatic Producer, he almost wrecked the station by staging, in one studio, and with limited resources, productions far more ambitious than even Savoy Hill with its panels and so on was attempting at the time

For all his ingenious experiments in microphone technique " John Watt has made his name with what is probably the simplest series of entertainments ever attempted by the B.B.C. His " Songs from the Shows " count as the most successful light programmes of 1932. He was good newspaper man enough to spot that the one infallible ingredient of broadcast entertainment is melody, and that a sequence of good tunes, well sung and played and connected with brief reminiscent commentary would be far more to the taste of his audience than all the panel juggling in the world

John Watt is a short, broad young man, given to shapeless check suits and a moustache that is alternately on and off He is never to be found either in a bad temper or without a new gag. His appetite for work is incredible.

Denis Freeman is the youngest of the B.B.C. producers—and the most worldly This young man with the monocle is of a staggering worldliness. Though writing, rehearsing, producing, and directing all the week through he finds time to attend first nights, private views, dances, parties, and night clubs. His acquaintance with the life of fashion has enabled him to bring many of the more sophisticated stars of stage and cabaret to the microphone. He seems to know everyone in London and everything that is going on Freeman has it in him to become the " Noel Coward of Broadcasting." He is sentimental, witty, a trifle world-weary, and a natural showman. His tendency to flirt with modernism " has been against him so far On the other hand, thousands of listeners will recall with pleasure such operettas as ' The King Can Do No Wrong,' ' A Seat in Hyde Park,' " Fame in a Night " and " Wonderful Week-End " (book and lyrics by C. Denis Freeman—not because they were " highbrow " but because they were simple. The B.B.C. as a whole has yet to learn that, since it is never easy to listen to a [illegible]-faced loud speaker and piece together the sounds which come, generally very rapidly, out of the blank, simplicity above everything else should be the aim of the broadcaster

It was in one of Denis Freeman's productions that occurred the incident of the Heroic Tenor The singer, an Italian, had been engaged for a wireless play in which his singing was to form part of the sound-background to a scene in Venice. He was placed in a studio by himself and told that he was

*Pal, the performing seal, one of the television " stars," does his turn, undismayed by the " mike " and the television screen*

By courtesy of the B.B.C.

to begin singing when the green light went on and continue at all costs until it was switched off again. In the meantime his voice would be faded up and down, as required, among the dialogue spoken in another studio. It was the tenor's first B.B.C. engagement and he was desperately anxious to "make good." The cue was given and away he went. When the scene was ended the studio was "faded out." Two hours later an attendant, visiting the studio to tidy up after the rehearsal, found a white-faced tenor, coatless and exhausted, still singing in a hoarse and feeble voice. Loyally the *signor* had sung three times right through his repertory. The green light was still burning. The producer upstairs at the Panel had forgotten to switch it off!

THE musical side of Productions is represented by two new recruits—Mark Lubbock and Harry Pepper. Before they joined the B.B.C. staff some months ago, both were known to listeners as established composers of light music.

Mark Lubbock, who, with his long hair and dark, distinguished face, has the air of a Disraeli hero, bought his experience with touring musical comedies. He is said to have been the only old Etonian who ever appeared in the chorus. He rose very quickly from chorus-man to musical director. His music for the Denis Freeman operettas is among the most charming written for broadcasting. He is an expert conductor, arranger, and lyric writer, too.

Harry Pepper has been known to listeners for several years, not only as the composer of more than twenty radio revues, but as one half of the two-piano team, "Harry Pepper and Doris Arnold." He began his stage career as pianist, box-office clerk, programme seller, cook and bottle washer to his father's once famous pierrot troupe, The White Coons. London theatre-goers will remember him as the pianist of the many Co-Optimist revivals. It was while he was with the Co-Optimists that he wrote the most successful of his songs, "Good-bye To All That." The title of Robert Graves's book was on everyone's lips at the time, and the idea for a song of the same name came to Harry while he was waiting on the stage during somebody else's turn. In fifteen minutes he had scribbled out words and music on the back of an envelope, only being interrupted by the necessity to join in the performance.

Harry Pepper wears a permanently worried air. This is deceptive: he is never worried—not even when John Watt dictates song words to him over the telephone and expects him to write a complete revue score overnight.

Industry and equanimity are the distinguishing qualities of the Bright Young Men. Broadcasting is an exacting profession. Those who write and produce for the theatre look upon themselves as supermen if they conceive and exploit two or three ideas in the course of a year, with copious assistance and the promise of great financial reward. The broadcaster's job is to devise fresh entertainment week in, week out, with inadequate assistance and no extra reward, not even the consolation of applause.

The "double life" of Broadcasting House is the young man of thirty-one who edits the *Radio Times* under his own name—Eric Maschwitz—and writes plays, films, and novels under the pseudonym of "Holt Marvell." From 9.30 a.m. until 6.30 p.m. he sits in an office at Broadcasting House controlling the editorial policy of the B.B.C.'s official journal, with occasional descents into the studios to watch the rehearsal of his own plays. From 6.30 p.m., until, one can only believe, 6 a.m., he locks himself away in an Adelphi studio, working at his hobby. The peculiar shape of his face has earned him the nickname of "Pear Drop" from Sir Walford Davies. Since January last this Pear Drop of the bulging brow has found time to raise the circulation of the *Radio Times* to 2,000,000 copies a week, write (with George Posford) the successful film, "Good Night, Vienna," complete, with the same composer, a stage operetta entitled "Gay Hussar," spend two months in New York and Hollywood and a fortnight in Warsaw, from which city his grandfather came to England sixty years ago, and broadcast half-a-dozen wireless talks.

Like his fellow-conspirator, Val Gielgud, Holt Marvell is Polish in origin, romantic in temperament and a firm believer in "getting on with the job." He never walks, only runs. His wireless plays "Carnival," "The Crossing," "Across the Moon," etc., have been successful because of their author's unshakable belief in sentiment as the backbone of entertainment.

Asked recently whether he had made any money out of a play of his which had been toured round the Provinces, Holt Marvell replied: "No, I lost money! The management paid me £25 in royalties before their finances gave out. The play cost £75 for typewriting and the publicity connected with the venture informed an old creditor of my whereabouts, thus enabling him to serve a writ upon me for a tailor's bill of £45. By the way, my play did make a record: it was the only play which failed to draw a single person to the theatre. This happened at a *matinée* performance in Edinburgh."

The head of the Talks Department is

Charles Siepmann, a tall young man with the fanatic eyes of a latter-day Savonarola. You can guess exactly what he is like from his choice of talks and talkers. He was at one time an assistant master at Borstal and has still to fight against an instinct to treat all listeners as though they were juvenile delinquents.

Of Mr Siepmann's Young Men the two brightest are 'Joe' Ackerley and Lionel Fielden. Mr Ackerley has outside fame as the author of a distinguished play 'Prisoners of War' and of that recently published and much discussed book, 'Hindu Holiday'.

Joe Ackerley was for several years a prisoner of war. His natural love of adventure guided him in the choice and management of two of the best series of talks yet broadcast. 'Escape' and 'Hazard', they will be remembered by listeners long after the B.B.C.'s more educational efforts have disappeared into the limbo reserved for skin-deep culture. Mr Ackerley is the handsomest man at Broadcasting House. His colleagues would unhesitatingly elect him 'Mr Broadcasting, 1933,' at any Atlantic City contest.

LIONEL FIELDEN, tall, slim and swarthy, has, like John Watt, a nomadic moustache. When it is in possession of his upper lip, its owner has the air of a rather bored Manchu. Like Beppe Nichols, editor-in-chief of all B.B.C. publications, Fielden fought at Gallipoli. He recalls that on the evening of the day he joined his unit on the Peninsula, an ingenuous youth of eighteen, the fragments of three cooks were blown through the doorway of the mess dug-out into the middle of the dinner table. One can imagine that, even at eighteen, Second Lieutenant Fielden merely raised one eyebrow. His post-War career has included relief work with Nansen in the Near East and an interpretership at The Hague. Lionel Fielden should rightly have been a diplomat. He possesses a manner, a subtlety and a taste in clothes which would grace any Legation and, in fact, regards the efforts of his superiors to quell all his brightest ideas with the bland superiority of a Third Secretary dealing with the infuriated Prime Minister of a minor nation.

The musical side of broadcasting occupies the time of a whole troupe of Bright Young Men, from the still-youthful Adrian Boult downwards. They include Owen Mase, Assistant Director of Music, whose "poker face" would make a soapstone Buddha appear excitable by contrast. Edward Clark, friend of every 'modernistic' composer in Europe, and therefore the enemy of all decent-minded romantics who have had to suffer his broadcast concerts of 'contemporary music', Julian Herbage, [illegible] as the bright boy on a Sunday-school card, who is deeply learned in eighteenth-century music. Victor Hely Hutchinson, man of all work, ready to compose, conduct, play the piano, or broadcast a talk on music (in surely the least musical voice ever granted to a musician!) and Stanford Robinson with a satanic expression in his 'Italian' eyes, whose good looks have for some years made it difficult for the ladies of his National Chorus to keep on the note.

This band of young men is responsible for the greatest musical enterprise in history. It is comforting to observe that they take their responsibility gaily. Musicians as a whole are somewhat [illegible] people.

Last of all the Bright Young Men comes the youngest and one of the brightest. His age is twenty and his name is Malcolm Frost. Three years ago Frost was a schoolmaster with an amateur interest in radio. He wrote several productions for the Belfast station, then trekked off round the world at his own expense to visit all the broadcasting stations of the Empire and study their problems at first hand. His enterprise has found its reward. To-day he is producer in charge of the programmes which the B.B.C. is recording gramophonically for renting to Empire stations where lack of artists and shortage of funds make the production of ambitious local programmes impossible. By the time this article appears Malcolm Frost will be away on his second world tour distributing his recorded programmes and conducting business in connexion with the Empire service which the B.B.C. inaugurated from its new short-wave station. Frost wears spectacles—it is believed to enhance his age—but despite them, he retains his air of a clever and somewhat cynical member of the Upper Sixth.

These Bright Young Men, and others like them, are responsible for the programmes which alternately infuriate and delight you. Most of them work at least six hours a day longer than the rest of us. They live and work in artificially imported air by artificial daylight. They have no hope of honourable retirement for another quarter of a century at least. Under Sir John Reith they have hammered out of nothing the world's model broadcasting service. If you don't like the way they do their work, try and think what you would do in their place.

# THE FACE OF JUDAS

## SIR PHILIP GIBBS

*Illustrated by*
SEABRIGHT

It is only in Paris that such a thing could happen—that a picture in a Salon should lead to a public scandal, and to a tragedy which excited a whole nation.

I happened to go to the private show in the Grand Palais with a friend of mine, the American artist Galloway, who knows all the smart people in Paris, although he prefers the shabby, hard-working set in Montparnasse.

The opening of the Salon is always an amusing and interesting function, especially if one happens to be with somebody who knows the notabilities and the various types of Parisian society. In spite of a financial and political crisis in France, Paris looked at its best on this May day, with the sun glinting on the constant stream of motor traffic—thousands of good-looking cars—and with the trees along the Champs Elysées in their freshest green, and the spring frocks of the ladies making a fashion show for a battery of cameras at the entrance doors. The rooms were overcrowded and it was difficult to see the pictures. Many people didn't trouble much to see them, being more amused at greeting each other and watching public personalities among their own groups of friends. I confess I didn't know any of them, or only one or two, like Léon Blum, the leader of the French socialists, and André Maurois and a Russian lady, who touched me on the arm and spoke a few laughing words. My friend Galloway pointed out people he knew, and rather staggered me by his acquaintance with the *beau monde*—Mme. la Vicomtesse of this, Mme. la Comtesse of that, even a little French duchess, who looked very gallant and charming, like a figure by Fragonard. Some of them greeted him with smiles and bows. There were statesmen and politicians, and diplomats and professors, and famous literary men and financial bigwigs, most of them wearing bits of ribbon and looking rather self-important, though with that intelligence and good humour which always animates a French crowd of whatever set on an occasion like this.

Galloway and I looked at the pictures and I was struck by the departure from modernism and madness by the exhibitors. For several years after the War, French art to my mind, had become violently Bolshevik, but here was a return to the academic tradition, although with a new strength and a modern touch.

"They're forgetting the War," said Galloway. "They don't think life so filthy. They will even admit beauty—though with some reluctance!"

There was a crowd in front of one picture. For a moment or two Galloway and I could not see it. But we were both aware of some sensation beyond the ordinary response to a picture, even though it might be unusually interesting—"the picture of the year," as

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"Oh, monsieur," said the Duchess "We are all discussing this terrible libel upon you. How is it that the Salon dares to exhibit a portrait of you under the name of Judas?"

it is called in the Academy show at Burlington House.

One of Galloway's lady friends was talking to him excitedly in a low voice, but not too low for me to hear, in her clear crisp French.

"It's unmistakable! He recognized it himself. So did his sad, beautiful wife with the haunted eyes. It was just a moment ago. Armand Lajeunesse looked as though he had been shot. I saw him stagger back for a moment, and then pull himself together and laugh uneasily. Very uneasily! His wife looked stupefied—and frightened."

"It is Lajeunesse to the last hair of his head," said somebody else. "And that laugh!"

Other people crowded round the picture were discussing it excitedly with the pleasurable sensation of having discovered a first-class scandal.

"It's shocking . . . One would never have believed——"

An elderly Frenchman, with the rosette of the Legion in his buttonhole, turned round to a friend and spoke a few ironical words.

"Not amusing to have one's portrait hung on the line with the label of Judas. A little humiliating! And, as it happens, according to the Scriptures, the original Judas was also hung on the line, if I do not forget my religious education by the Jesuit fathers."

This remark, so French in spirit, caused a general laugh, which was followed by a comment more serious from my friend Galloway's little French duchess.

"All the same it is an outrage. Who is this painter who has done this libel on poor Lajeunesse, who, after all, gives admirable luncheons to his friends and is the husband of our most charming actress? Of his novels I will say nothing as I do not read them."

"They are excessively morbid, my dear Duchess. It is better not to read them though the author is a member of the French Academy, as he informs his readers on every title-page. The artist did you say? Jacques Matthew. The name is new to me. But then I know nothing about these modern painters."

Galloway gave an exclamation of surprise.

"I have met him in Montparnasse, where he is a new-comer after a life out East. He is generally drunk. But the fellow knows how to paint."

I had a look at the picture. It was a life-sized figure in a heavy wooden frame, upon which the name Judas was carved in bold letters. It was a study of Judas before he hanged himself. Behind him was the tree with the suggestion of a rope tied into a noose. But it was the face which mattered. It was painted with extraordinary strength—admirable brushwork, I thought—with an odd lighting effect, as though a shaft of sunlight through the branches of the tree had sharply revealed the head, leaving his figure, except for one arm, in a greenish gloom. It was the face of a handsome, middle-aged man, with a dark beard and moustache, and rather full, sensual lips. The power of the painting was in the expression of the face, which somehow gave the look of a tortured, frightened, and craven soul.

Perhaps, but for that inscription on the frame, one would not have read so much into it. I am not quite sure of that. But this was the portrait of a coward and of a guilty wretch, a man who had betrayed his friend and Master and now was going to take his own life by way of that noose on the apple tree. It was a tragic study, very cruel because it revealed depths of depravity and tragedy in human nature—unless I exaggerate unconsciously because of the sensation it produced in me. Anyhow, it was a work of great talent. Every critic in France agreed on that.

WHILE I was studying it I heard a movement behind me.

"There is Lajeunesse and his wife!" said a voice.

I turned sharply and saw two figures walking quickly towards the entrance hall. In order to get out of the Salon it was necessary to pass this way. The man—Lajeunesse—was undoubtedly the original of this portrait. There was no mistake about it. There was that face on the canvas alive and walking towards us with the dark beard and moustache and the full, sensual lips, and rather queer eyebrows slanted upwards from the bridge of the nose.

One thing struck me instantly, though I had only seen the painting once and not for more than a few seconds. The left hand of "Judas" had only three complete fingers. The third finger had been cut off at the first joint, as though the painter had forgotten to complete this hand. As Lajeunesse came down the gallery with his wife I noticed that he raised his hand nervously to his beard. The third finger had been cut off at the first joint. He would have passed the group around the painting of Judas if the little French Duchess had not stood right in front of him with a smiling effrontery.

"Oh monsieur, we are all discussing this terrible libel upon you. Do enlighten us. How is it that the Salon dares to exhibit a portrait of you under the name of Judas? It is too shocking. It is scandalous!"

Lajeunesse halted and glanced towards the painting.

"A portrait of me?" he asked, as though

he had not seen the picture before 'Surely not!'

Oh, but certainly" said the little Duchess. Unmistakable And abominable! What audacity by this unknown painter

Mme Lajeunesse, who was more famous under her acting name of Élise Vergnaud - I had seen her several times at the Comédie Française—spoke coldly and haughtily, but she was very pale

There is no resemblance to my husband He is not like that. I beg of you not to make impertinent remarks"

The Duchess ignored this rebuke

Oh, but it is exactly like! Everybody recognizes it instantly It will make a public scandal, I am afraid

Lajeunesse laughed uneasily

No, no! You exaggerate Am I like that? I do not recognize the least resemblance'

He glanced again at the painting

Absurd! True. I have a beard. But there are others who have beards. It is my type of face, perhaps. Every human face belongs to a type'

Yes but it is deliberate,' said the persistent little Duchess. 'It is a portrait, monsieur And it is called Judas. Look the artist has chopped off the third finger of your left hand. I noticed that you had lost a finger joint when I had lunch with you one day at one of your charming parties I confess I wondered when and why it had happened So naughty of me'

For one or two seconds Lajeunesse became more like the painting by Jacques Matthieu In his eyes, just for that second or two, there was a look of cowardice, of fear and, I thought, of guilt

It's a trivial coincidence, he said, sharply "In any case, I have been caricatured many times. It is the penalty of fame—of notoriety—in France."

Another voice spoke It belonged to the elderly Frenchman who had remembered that Judas had been "hung on the line

'That is very true, my dear Lajeunesse But a caricature is not quite like a portrait in the Salon especially when it is entitled Judas It is not my business, of course but speaking as a man of law I think you have a clear case for a libel action against both the painter and the Salon. It might be worth your while Excellent publicity for your novels!"

My husband's novels do not need advertisement," said Mme. Lajeunesse, very haughtily "In any case, I have a rehearsal to-day You will excuse us"

She nodded to the Duchess and put her gloved hand on her husband's arm as they moved away

The Frenchman who was a man of law and the little Duchess smiled into each other's eyes

Strange' said the Duchess. 'He is afraid I could see it in his eyes. I would give a thousand francs to know the story behind this picture. It is of course vengeance

"*Cherchez la femme*, answered the elderly cynic

GALLOWAY and I left the Salon after looking at the other pictures—or a few out of the five thousand—and took a taxi to a little restaurant up in the Montparnasse district, where we had lunch

Galloway referred again to the picture called Judas

There'll be a devil of a row about it if the Press get hold of the story And, of course, they're sure to do so. There will be some bright paragraphs in the *Cri de Paris*!'

How on earth did the picture get into the Salon? I asked 'Surely the Committee must have recognized Lajeunesse? He seems to be well known'

Galloway flicked his cigarette and shrugged his shoulders

Probably half of them are as blind as bats and the other half too bored to look at any picture after the first three thousand Can you wonder? Or it may have been hung by a workman because there was a space which wanted filling. I could tell you some amusing yarns like that.

What sort of a fellow is the painter? I asked 'Do you know anything about him?'

Galloway told me that he was a melancholy-looking "guy" with a haggard face and deep, sunken eyes and a skin bronzed to the colour of leather by a life out in the Far East—Indo-China or some part of the world like that He dressed like a tramp and came to the Dôme sometimes at night where he sat smoking innumerable cigarettes, drinking cognac, and staring moodily at the passing traffic, as though his mind were a thousand miles away from these artists and models and tourists chattering on each side of him

I talked to him," said Galloway, because of an accident when I upset his glass of cognac clumsily with the sleeve of my overcoat

A thousand pardons!' I exclaimed

It is nothing,' he answered, in a rather musical voice very low and deep-toned

Galloway asked his permission to order a new drink, raising an arm towards one of the waiters

Please don't trouble yourself, said

"One day you will be undeceived," said the painter, gravely. "Women are essentially and utterly treacherous. **But I am glad to meet a man who has not yet found them out.**"

"Human nature is essentially depraved," he said. "It is capable of the vilest crimes. Humanity was a mistake in the order of creation. At least we have betrayed our destiny."

A waiter appeared and Galloway ordered his new acquaintance another cognac, and

the shabby looking man.

"If I drink one less cognac than usual, it will save my throat and my purse. I am, of course, drinking myself to death. What else can one do in this abominable world?"

Galloway was rather startled by those words, he told me, though not easily disturbed by cynicism or strong language. But this haggard looking fellow had some touch of nobility in his face—anyhow some dignity of manner which Galloway found rather odd and attractive.

"You do not approve of our world?" he answered lightly. "I'm rather pleased with it myself."

The French painter looked at Galloway for a moment with a slight flicker of amusement in his eyes, which then became moody again.

in the strength of it took a chair at his table.

"There are some good types," he argued. "I know many delightful people. The great mass of humanity is decent-living, good-natured, simple hearted."

When Galloway's friend lit another cigarette he noticed that the man's hands were rough and callousedas though he had used them for a bit of manual toil.

"You are lucky in your friends," he remarked quietly, though not without irony. "Wait until they are tempted. Wait until you want their loyalty. They will betray you if it pays them to do so."

Galloway refused to agree, he told me.

"No, no. There are many good fellows about. Women especially have a sense of loyalty."

He stared at the American with a kind of wonderment.

"You say that sincerely?" he asked. "You believe that?"

"Certainly," said Galloway.

"One day," he answered, gravely, "you will be undeceived. Women are essentially and utterly treacherous. But I am glad to meet a man who has not yet found them

out. I see you are drinking *porto blanc*. Let me order you another."

Galloway had a long conversation with the man that evening. It ranged over the War and the post-War years, and the possible collapse of civilization—which this stranger thought would be an excellent thing—and the fatalism of the Oriental mind and the place of art in life, which Galloway maintained was an expression of religious faith and intellectual philosophy, but which this stranger asserted was a sensual indulgence designed to attract the female of the species, or a pitiful attempt of the human mind to perpetuate his egotism beyond the grave, and so dodge complete annihilation. He invited Galloway to go to his studio if ever he wanted a drink or further conversation on the absurdities of life. He lived, he said, in a filthy den on the fifth floor, in a courtyard off the rue de Rennes. His name was tacked up on a bit of cardboard—Jacques Mattieu.

Galloway had never been, though he had met the man frequently on the *terrasse* outside the Dôme and had established a kind of friendship with him.

"Why not call on him this afternoon?" I suggested. "Take me with you. I'm interested in what you tell me about him."

Galloway hesitated about this idea. He was not quite sure that Mattieu would welcome him if he brought a stranger. However, he was prepared to risk it.

WE went round about five o'clock. A frowsy old concierge in a courtyard off the rue de Rennes nodded when Galloway asked if the painter was in his studio.

'On the fifth. He came in drunk last night as usual. This afternoon there have been Press reporters to see him. Perhaps he has murdered someone. It would not surprise me.'

We went up five flights of wooden stairs and saw the man's name tacked on the door. Galloway knocked, and after a moment a voice answered irritably—

"Who's there?"

Galloway announced himself, and after another moment or two the door was opened and I saw Jacques Mattieu, the painter of the Judas picture—a tall, gaunt man of middle age, very bronzed and leathery, as Galloway had described him. He was only half dressed, in a pair of old trousers and a flannel shirt open at the neck. He wore an old pair of slippers on his bare feet.

"Excuse me," he said politely. "I was asleep after getting drunk last night. Come in."

Then he noticed me, and looked suspicious and uneasy for a moment.

Galloway introduced me as his friend.

"Not a journalist, I hope?" inquired Mattieu. "I have been plagued by gentlemen of the Press to-day. They have some cock-and-bull story about my picture in the Salon."

I passed as a novelist, and followed Mattieu into a room furnished barely with a table, an easel, an iron bedstead, and a chair or two. A number of canvases were stacked up against the wall.

Galloway sat on the edge of the bed and the painter brought up a chair for me and invited me to take a seat. I was rather impressed by his dignity and some charm about him. He was certainly a gentleman in manners.

He made an apology for not offering us a drink.

"I'm afraid I've drunk all the brandy I had. If you will wait a few minutes I will go and buy a bottle. Then we can talk, unless you prefer not to talk, which is best."

He found a packet of *petits bleus* in the pocket of an old jacket hanging on a nail and offered each of us a cigarette, which we accepted.

"Don't bother about the bottle," said Galloway. "We haven't come here to drink. What is all this about your picture in the Salon? Why should the Press get after you?"

He spoke carelessly, as though he had heard nothing about a scandal.

Mattieu shrugged his shoulders.

'A *canard*! They say it is a portrait of a man named Lajeunesse. I seem to have heard of him somewhere.'

'A novelist,' said Galloway. "Rather famous in a certain set, though personally I can't say I like his work. There is an evil streak in it—a dark spirit. But he is a member of the French Academy.'

"I don't read these modern novels," answered the painter. "They are all filthy, I am told. It's the spirit of the age, I imagine."

Galloway winced at this sweeping assertion, so in keeping with this man's disgust at humanity. Then he made another remark about Lajeunesse.

"He is the husband of Élise Vergniaud. That is why he is so well known in Parisian society."

Jacques Mattieu dropped the fag-end of his cigarette and helped himself to another.

'I have been away for some years in the Far East. The fame of people in Paris did not reach me out there. This wife of Lajeunesse is famous, you say? Or notorious?"

An actress, Galloway told him. 'She plays at the Comédie Française. She is very talented and charming in middle-aged parts. I remember her twenty years ago when she made her name in one of Rostand's plays. She was exquisite and beautiful.'

'And now she is middle-aged and getting fat, perhaps?' said the painter. 'They all get fat, these women, so exquisite and beautiful in their youth! Or thin and scraggy and hard and hideous.'

'She is still beautiful,' said Galloway.

'And she is married, you say, to Lajeunesse, the writer of filthy novels?'

'I didn't say filthy,' Galloway reminded him.

'No, true. You said they had an evil streak in them—a dark spirit. This beautiful woman you're telling me about is the wife of a man with a dark spirit. That is curious. An interesting couple.'

We chatted for half an hour or so on other subjects. He didn't offer to show us any of his pictures, and we didn't ask to see them. As we left and stood for a moment in the open doorway, a young man came up the stairs and addressed Mattieu.

'Monsieur Jacques Mattieu?'

'If you are a reporter,' said Mattieu, 'I have nothing to say.'

'I'm the representative of *Le Matin*,' said the young man. 'We are reproducing your portrait of Lajeunesse in the Salon. If you will allow me to interview you—'

'I have a portrait of Judas in the Salon,' said Mattieu. 'I have nothing to say about it.'

'But monsieur—'

We left them arguing, and the next morning in the *Matin* there was a sensational description of the portrait of Lajeunesse as Judas, and a report of a conversation with the painter—who had refused to admit that he had ever seen Lajeunesse—and some details of his life gleaned no doubt from the concierge, who suspected that he had committed a murder and was not surprised. He had come to Paris a year before from the Far East. He had few friends, and was very reserved. He lived in a poor way and sometimes seemed to go several days without eating—at least without leaving his studio or sending out for meals. He kept bits of bread in his pocket with which he fed the birds in the Tuileries gardens. Nothing more than that was known about him.

*Le Matin* was not the only newspaper to take up this story. The *Figaro* made an attack upon the Salon and urged Lajeunesse to take action for libel. Several members of the hanging committee were interviewed and expressed their consternation. They had not recognized the likeness of this Judas by an unknown painter to a famous man of letters. Doubtless, with so many pictures to judge, this one may have slipped in without due consideration. They repudiated all responsibility for legal redress. They were not satisfied that it was intended as a portrait of M. Lajeunesse. Certainly the coincidence regarding the third finger was an unhappy one. Any action in the matter lay between M. Lajeunesse and M. Jacques Mattieu.

THE scandal was, I think, used by the French newspapers not only for its own interest as a society sensation, but to divert attention from the political and economic crisis. It is probable also that various journalists and literary men not too friendly to Lajeunesse, no warm-hearted admirers of his work, and envious of his sales, were not disinclined to drag down his reputation under the plea of being very sensitive regarding his honour.

'For honour's sake,' wrote one literary critic, 'it is essential that M. Lajeunesse should take legal action in this matter. Surely no member of the French Academy may be publicly hoelled as Judas without vindicating his integrity and claiming heavy damages for such an outrageous attack.' We shall not be reconciled to the position of M. Lajeunesse as a distinguished man of letters—at least as a popular novelist—until we learn that proceedings have been instituted against the Salon and the painter of this now notorious portrait.'

So they hounded after the chase, until one particular reporter beat all his *confrères* with a great story. But before that was published Galloway told me of a strange incident which happened when he went to visit Mattieu again. The man had been missing from the *terrasse* of the Dôme for over a week, and Galloway thought he might be ill. In any case, he was curious about him, as he confesses.

It was after dark when he went round to the courtyard off the rue de Rennes and stumbled up the dark stairs and found the door of Mattieu's room. The painter was in, and left the door open when he went back into his room to talk to Galloway.

'I am ill,' he said. 'Excuse me if I do not ask you to stay.'

He looked desperately ill, and had a nasty cough. It is probable that he had been without food for a day or two, which was a habit of his, according to the newspapers. Galloway felt sorry for him, and suggested going out to some *bistro* and getting a bite of food and a drink.

Mattieu declined, not without civility and a touch of appreciation for this kindness.

"You are good to me. Why do you interest yourself in a broken man like me?"

"I admire your genius," said Galloway.

Mattieu shrugged his shoulders.

"I have a trick of painting. What's the use of it?"

He put his hand on Galloway's shoulder.

"You look like a good fellow," he said. "Would you betray me for the price of a drink?"

Galloway thought he looked a little mad. Otherwise he might have taken offense at this suggestion of treachery.

"I believe I am loyal to my friends," said Galloway. "What about that bite of food?"

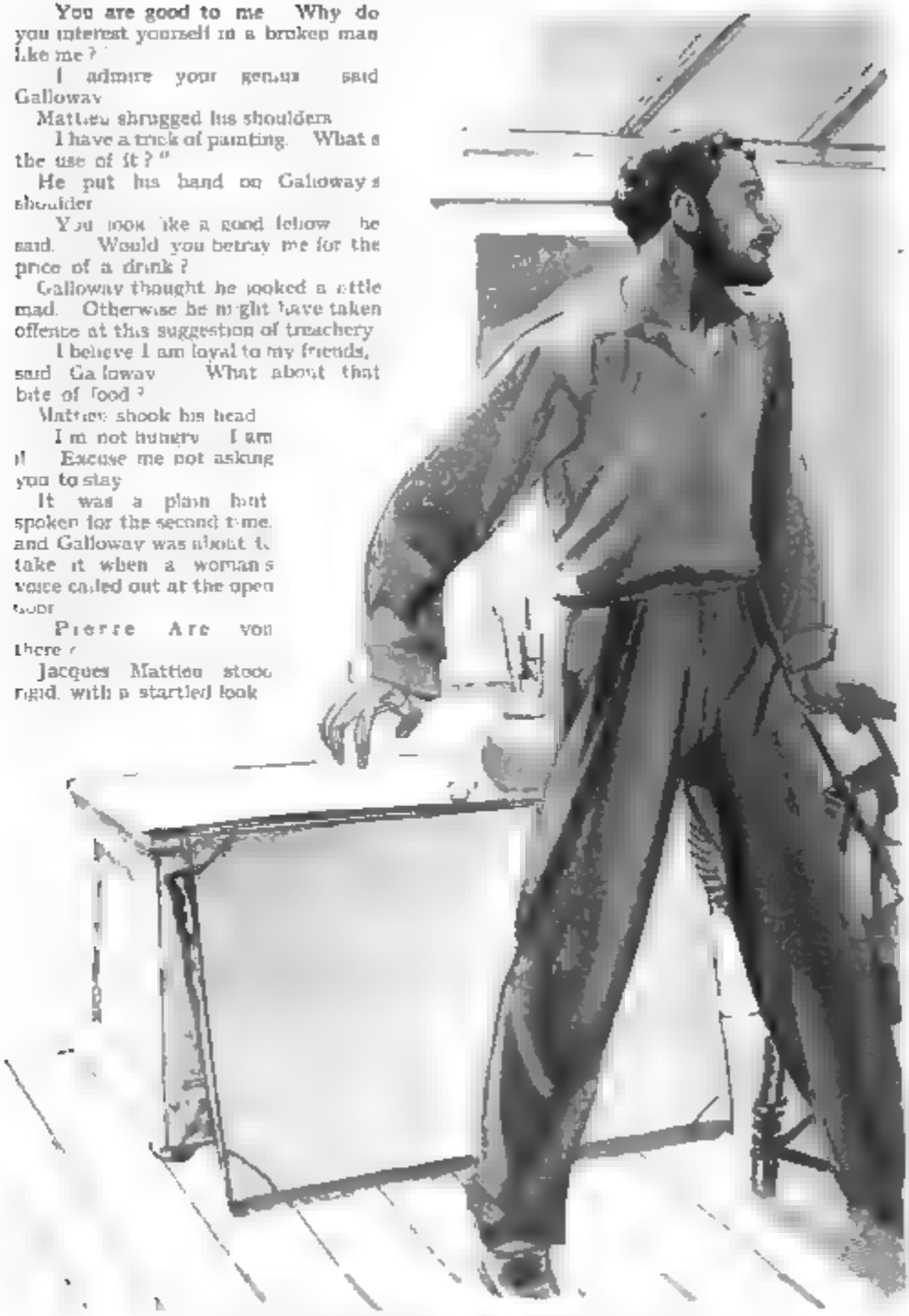
Mattieu shook his head.

"I'm not hungry. I am ill. Excuse me not asking you to stay."

It was a plain hint spoken for the second time, and Galloway was about to take it when a woman's voice called out at the open door.

"Pierre! Are you there?"

Jacques Mattieu stood rigid, with a startled look



*"Pierre!" she cried, as she came further into the room. Mattieu staggered back, almost as though he would fall. "I am not Pierre," he said. "I do not know you."*

"Who is that?" he asked sharply. "Who calls me Pierre? I am Jacques Matthieu."

There were light steps on the bare boards. Matthieu's room was almost dark, the only light being the last twilight of Paris coming through his window. Galloway was in shadow, sitting in an angle of the room shut off from the window light. He saw a figure enter the room in a hesitating, frightened way. It was a woman. It was held there by an intense interest which made him forget that he ought not to be there, or at least should make some move.

"Pierre!" said Mme. Lajeunesse. "It is twenty-five years since we knew each other—since you loved me. I have come here to ask for your forgiveness and your pity. Do not drag out that old story of our dead lives—do not let it be dragged up. What is the use? Why torture a man who has been tortured enough by his own conscience? That portrait of yours was very cruel, Pierre. I want you to take it away from the Salon. I

Mme. Lajeunesse—Élise Vergnaud as she was better known.

She spoke one word again as she came further into the room.

Pierre!

Matthieu staggered back almost as though he would fall. Then he stood rigid again, staring at this woman.

I am not Pierre, he said. I do not know you. How dare you come to this room? Go away!"

She held out her hands to him in a pleading way. Her eyes, very luminous in this twilight which was almost darkness, seemed to be searching the face of Jacques Matthieu. She did not see Galloway standing in the corner

implore you to take it away. I ask you in the name of the love you gave me when we were young. I have never known happiness since then."

Jacques Mattieu as he called himself, seemed unable to answer. He breathed heavily. Galloway could hear him panting, and could even see the rise and fall of the man's chest as he drew the deep half strangled breaths. It was then that Galloway rose from the bed, sorry that he had heard so much, ashamed of himself for having remained so long.

"Pardon me," he said.

Mme. Lajeunesse gave a sharp cry.

"I thought Pierre was alone. Who is that?"

It was then that Mattieu spoke.

"Pierre is not here. Jacques Mattieu is here."

He grasped Galloway's arm in an iron grip.

"Do not go, my friend. Protect me from this woman. She pretends to know me. She forces her way into my room. Tell her that if she does not go when I ask her I will throw her downstairs."

He spoke the last words with extreme violence, terribly menacing.

Mme. Lajeunesse turned very pale. Galloway could see how white her face was.

"I go," she said. "It is, I see, useless to plead with you. I believed in your nobility—your pity—your remembrance of love. Forgive me, Pierre. I am getting an old woman now. It is hard at my age——"

He shouted at her furiously.

"Go away!"

She raised her hands to him in a kind of prayer and then drooped her head, sobbing, and went out of the room and downstairs, as Galloway heard.

The painter stood silent for several minutes. Then he turned to Galloway and gave a harsh laugh.

"It is absurd. That woman pretends to know me by the name of Pierre. I am Jacques Mattieu. I do not know the creature. It was perhaps blackmail."

He shivered violently and turned towards an empty bottle on the table.

"A thousand curses! I have run out of cognac and have a chill. I am shivering."

"Come out and have a drink," said Galloway again.

Mattieu did not seem to hear him.

He laughed again, loudly.

"She believed in my nobility—my pity—my remembrance of love. Did you ever hear such *blague*? A complete stranger to me. An actress playing a part. How inconceivable that she should come here and say such things to an unknown man! She is mad, of course. It has made me feel queer."

He went out with Galloway and they sat in a *bistro* near by, and Mattieu drank cheap brandy until he was fuddled. But he did not speak another word about the visit of Mme. Lajeunesse. He talked about the technique of painting and the curious effects of light in Indo-China, and the customs of the natives out there.

THEN there was published that particular story already referred to. The reporter had ferreted things out. He had got his clue from an old model at one of the schools, who believed that he recognized Jacques Mattieu, this bearded bronzed, middle-aged man as a young artist he had known in Paris twenty-five years back. At that time he was a clean-shaven young man, desperately poor but very gay and generous when he earned a few francs. His name was—the old model could hard y remember his name. It was Pierre Something. Something rather aristocratic. He had got into trouble. Very serious trouble. Murder or something. Yes, murder or manslaughter about some passionate affair. A dead woman was found in his room—strangled. He had been about with her in Paris. Suspicion fastened on him although, of course, she had other friends. One of them was a young man—a young literary man—who shared the artist's room. But he proved that he was away that night when they had found the woman. The artist himself admitted that his friend was away that night, thereby fastening the guilt upon himself.

And there was a little actress girl—a pretty thing—who swore that the other fellow, the literary man, had been with her in a cabaret until long after the murder was committed.

This was the story of the old model. The reporter got to work on it. He turned up the police records of twenty-five years before. He found that the young artist's name was Pierre de l'Espinasse, and that the young literary man who shared his room was Armand Lajeunesse. In the trial, there was some suspicion against the latter until Pierre de l'Espinasse—against his own interests—admitted that his friend had not been in the room that night. There was a scene in court during the evidence of a young actress, who swore that Armand Lajeunesse had been in a cabaret with her until long after midnight. She swooned in the witness-box and had to be carried out. Her name was Élise Vergniaud, and she had been the *chère amie* of the accused man. He was sentenced under the charge of manslaughter—after a plea of extenuating circumstances by the jury—to seven years' penal servitude. He was sent out

to the penal settlements in Indo-China, and seems to have stayed out there after his sentence had expired

'It is a matter of public knowledge,' wrote the reporter, 'that Élise Vergniaud is now the wife of Armand Lajeunesse, Member of the French Academy. It is reasonably beyond doubt that the painter of the Judas portrait who calls himself Jacques Matthieu, is none other than the ex-convict Pierre de l'Espinasse. We believe that no more dramatic and romantic story has been revealed in recent years, but there is still a mystery behind it all. Why should this ex-convict, this painter of genius, as he has been acknowledged, portray his former friend as Judas, though in the court, twenty-five years ago, the accused man's own evidence exonerated the comrade who shared his rooms? We hesitate to suggest that it is a case of vengeance against the woman who gave her love to the man who was liberated rather than to him who was condemned."

Galloway and I read this story sitting at one of the little tables outside the Café Napolitain.

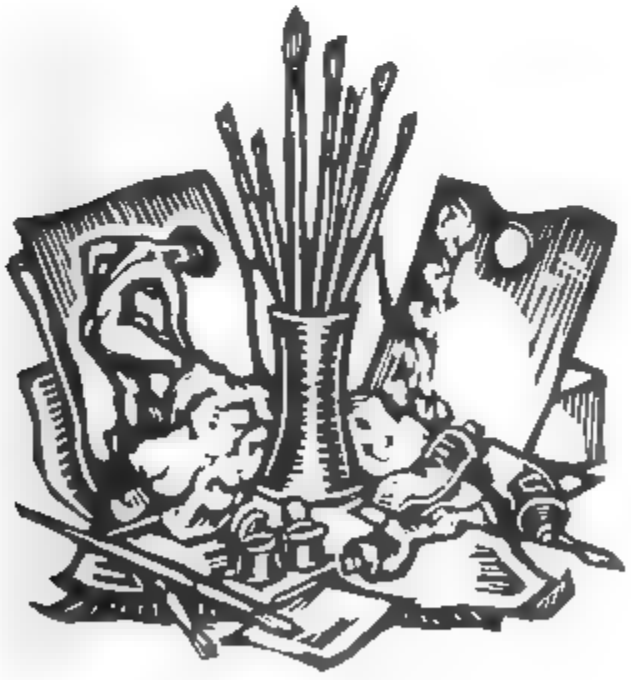
"It seems to be true," said Galloway. "What a story! What a tragedy!"

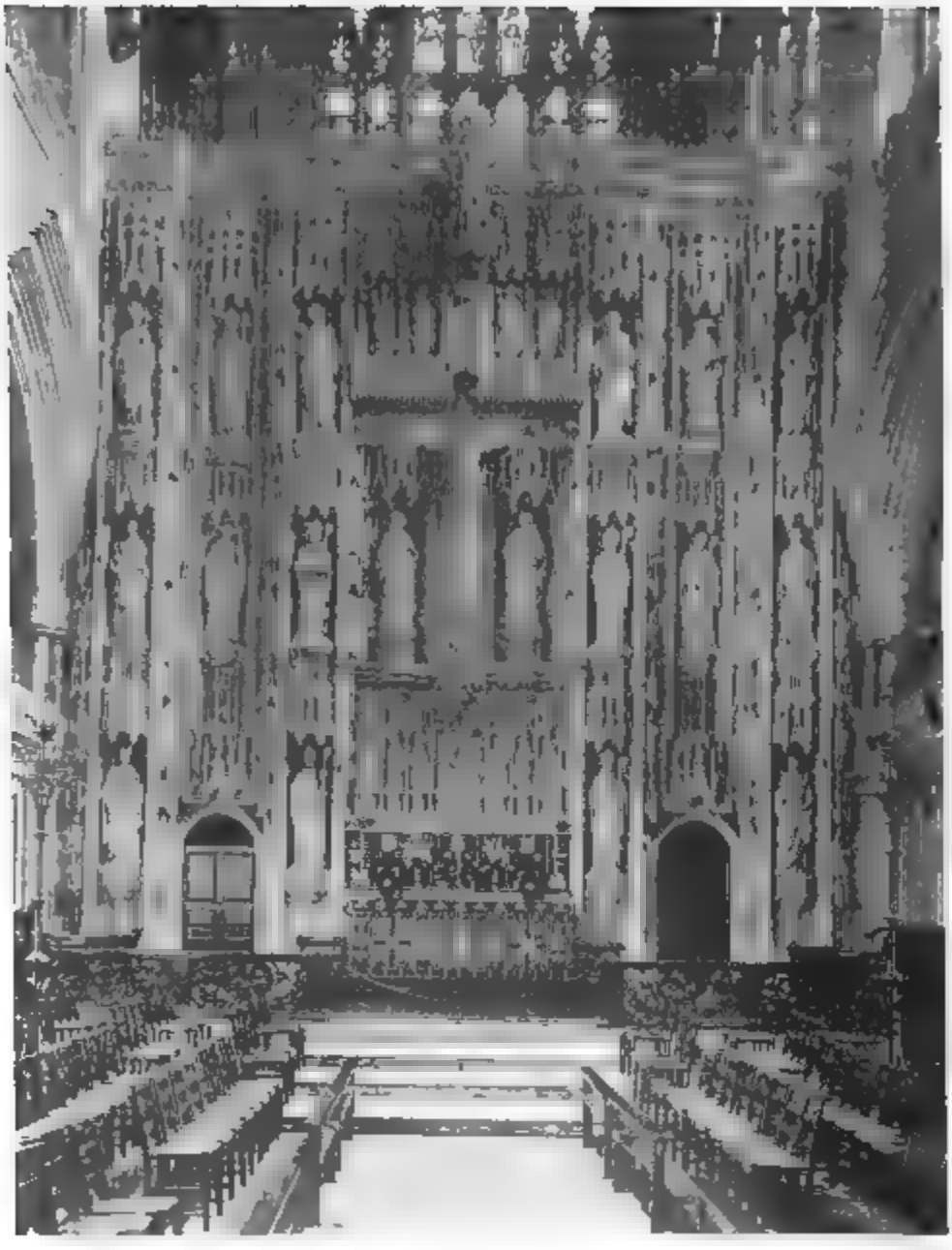
"But why the portrait of Judas?" I asked. "After all these years?"

Galloway was silent for a few minutes.

"It seems to me as clear as a pikestaff," he said presently. "Matthieu—Pierre de l'Espinasse—shielded his friend and sacrificed himself. In return his friend stole his woman's love while that poor wretch was doing time in Indo-China. He has been saving up his vengeance all these years. That portrait was his message to a traitor. A very mild rebuke, I call it!"

It was not mild in its effect upon the man rebuked. In the Bois de Boulogne, not far from the Châlet des Îles, at dawn on a May morning, Armand Lajeunesse hanged himself. There was a great sensation in the French Press. The portrait of Judas was withdrawn from the Salon.





*The superb reredos that is one of the glories of Winchester Cathedral. It was commenced early in the fifteenth century by Cardinal Beaufort.*

# WINCHESTER

By

E. V. LUCAS

C.H.

We saw when we were at Durovernum—or should I say Canterbury?—that, after landing in Kent in A.D. 43, the Romans consolidated themselves and then made their road, Watling Street, to Wroxeter, gradually subduing and annexing the rest of England and apportioning it among provincial governors. A site so eminently fitted for a military centre as Winchester, with its surrounding rampart of hills and Southampton Water so near, was quickly discerned, and therefore Winchester, or Venta Belgarum, was founded as the meeting-point of six roads, not the least populous of which led to and from the seaports of Bittern and Porchester, while another ran through Atrebatum (or Silchester) to London or Londinium, the Thames or Tamsa being crossed at Pontes or Staines. These Roman roads, although they were made eighteen or nineteen centuries ago, are still our approaches to Winchester, from whatever point we come.

Before the Roman conquest Winchester had been important—such is the testimony of the revealing spade—as a Celtic stronghold. After the Romans faded away weary of stubborn colonization and homesick for Italian sun and wine, it was important again as the capital of the kings of Wessex, who later were to rule all England, of whom the first, Egbert, was buried here in 839, while in the old painted chests set on the walls of the cathedral choir is the *débris* of a whole dynasty. For centuries Winchester was the London of England. Alfred ruled here, Canute is buried here, Edward the Confessor was crowned here, William the Conqueror made it one of his homes, to be near the New Forest glades and coverts, William II was buried here, Henry VIII entertained the Emperor Charles V here, Mary was married here to Philip of Spain.

It was Charles the Second's intention to have a country palace here and Sir Christopher Wren was instructed to draw up the plans, but though the plans were made and are in existence, the building was only begun and has since been incorporated in the barracks in the Southampton Road. Other links between Winchester and the second Charles are Nell Gwynn and Prebendary Ken. In 1683 the Merry Monarch's merry mistress, chancing to pass that way, demanded the use of the prebendal house during her visit, but Ken, though he was one of the King's chaplains, stoutly refused, saying that a woman of ill repute had no place under a clergyman's roof. It is all to the credit of Charles that when, a little later, the bishopric of Bath and Wells became vacant, he should have insisted upon its being given to "the little black fellow who refused his lodging to poor Nell."

We saw when we were at Canterbury how the second Roman invaders, bringing Christianity, established themselves there at the end of the sixth century. To Winchester, where there was, almost beyond doubt, a pagan Roman temple now lost in the foundations of the cathedral, the new religion in due course came, the Roman missionaries landing on the shore of Southampton Water and the first bishopric being founded in 662. Of Winchester's earliest

Photo: Hall & Taylor

*The Tower and part of the Cloisters of Winchester College. The Tower was originally built between 1473 and 1481 on the site of an even earlier tower dating back to William of Wykeham, the founder*

ecclesiastics there is no room here to speak but it is noteworthy that in the ninth century the Bishop was St Swithun—not of course canonized until later—as a matter of fact, on July 15th, 971—and St Swithun was a prelate and organizer of great piety and good sense. He was counsellor to Egbert, and tutor to the heir to the throne, Ethelwulf; as an historian he was probably the originator of the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle"; he was a builder, among his works being a bridge over the Itchen. As a performer of miracles he shone both during his life and after it. Should a woman carrying eggs over his new bridge chance to fall and break them, what did the Bishop but make them whole again? while his tomb was a resort of all who were poor in heart or body. Among his most lusty devotees was a hunchback whose hump his beneficence had removed.

If to-day, when miracles at his shrine are no longer expected, St Swithun is known more as a weather portent than as a man of God it is no fault of his. The origin of the superstition which makes July 15th so critical to the young and the athletic (for whom the sun chiefly shines) is the legend that when the time came, on July 15th 1093, for the saint's translation from his chapel outside the cathedral to a resting-place within there was continuous rain for forty days, until, in fact, interpreting the deluge as a mark of his disapproval the monks desisted. The only tangible memorial of St Swithun that is left is the iron grille which once protected the too passionate pilgrims from his shrine and which has now been set up before a doorway in the cathedral's north-west nave.

St Swithun may be the best known of Winchester bishops, although not in his episcopal capacity, but he had followers of more importance to the present structure, notably the first Norman bishop, Walkelyn, a cousin of William the Conqueror, who was responsible for the magnificent Norman work in the transepts and the first nave. The tower which he built at the west end collapsed in 1107, as a sign, it was thought, of divine displeasure due to the burial of so impious a ruler as William Rufus in this serene and sacred place. The tower was never rebuilt in its old position, but set in the midst, where it now is. Walkelyn's cathedral, begun in 1079, was finished by Bishop Henry of Blois, King Stephen's brother a century later. It was then that the black font of Tournai marble, which you now see in the nave, was installed, with its

carvings of scenes from the life of the children's patron, St Nicholas.

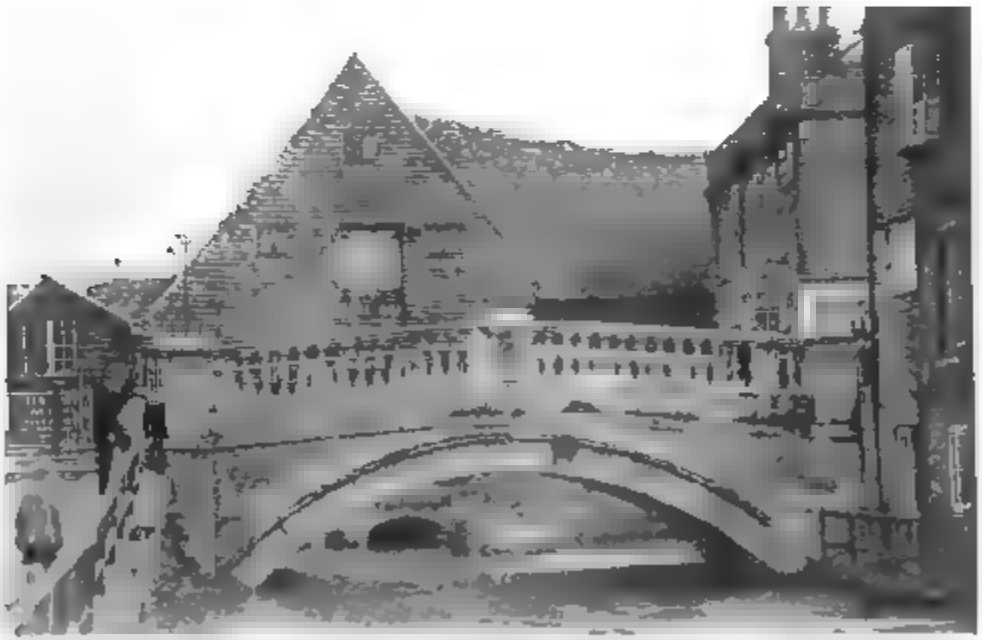
At that time the bishops lived, not, as to-day, in a quiet gentlemanly residence, hard by the cathedral walls, surrounded by flowers and trees, but in a fortress built by Henry of Blois to the south-east of the cathedral, known as Wolvesey Castle, within whose ruined walls lawn tennis is now played. You find it at the far end of College Street.

For the cathedral nave as we now see it, with its stone-vaulted roof, we are indebted to the most potent of all the long roll of Winchester's bishops, William of Wykeham, who founded the school and gave it its famous motto, founded New College, Oxford, and was Chancellor of England under Edward III and Richard II. Bishop William of Wykeham was educated at Winchester, he administered the see for thirty-six years, and in 1404 he was buried in the chantry which bears his name.

If it is possible, you should always enter a cathedral by the west door, which at Winchester is open whenever the weather permits. The eye thus receives a shock of pleasure more sudden and memorable than any subsequent impression. Particularly is this the case at Winchester, where the roof of the nave is unbroken to the far, far end, and where the external solidity of the building has not prepared you for such mystical whiteness and grace.

Of detail there is too much to see for any pen to be able to cope with, from, say, the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, the earliest of the Gothic accretions, with its primitive paintings, to the recent and very pompous memorial to Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, so different from the simplicity of Bishop Fox's, with its humble *memento mori* beneath. The cathedral is, one might say without exaggeration, inexhaustible, and I envy those who have time to study it and absorb it.

Among the lay tombs not the least appealing is that of Izaac Walton, who died here in 1683, aged ninety. His slab, in the floor of Prior Silkstede's chapel, was inscribed by the "little black fellow," Bishop Ken, who was half-brother to Walton's second wife, Anne Ken, his host in the Close was Bishop Morley, who held the see for twenty-two years and was a good friend not only to the church and state and to the compleat angler, but to Winchester itself, for it was he who built and endowed the college for matrons, named after him. In addition to



*A picturesque spot in old Winchester. Soke bridge over the Itchen, with the ancient city mill in the background.*

Walton's tomb, the cathedral has a statue of him and in the Silkstede chapel a fisherman's window where, in the lowest lights right and left, the good old man is seen, once by the kitchen meditating over a book, and once by the Dove in Derbyshire, in company with Master Charles Cotton his collaborator.

Another literary shrine in Winchester Cathedral is that of the author of "Pride and Prejudice." Although Winchester is proud to claim Jane Austen as a citizen she came here, alas! only to die, with her slender golden tale of work never to be resumed. She arrived in May 1817 to be near a famous physician, taking lodgings in College Street, in the house where a tablet has been placed, opposite a beautiful quiet walled garden and in July she died. But her grave, in the north aisle of the nave, has made Winchester a place of pilgrimage. The inscription, while drawing attention to "the benevolence of her heart, the sweetness of her temper and the extraordinary endowment of her mind," says nothing of the men and women whom she created and added to our own domestic circles. O rare Jane Austen!

The Winchester cathedral Close has not the order of Canterbury's or Salisbury's and it seems to be peculiarly the haunt of cyclists, but show me any Close without some distinguished reserved English residence, some glimpses of lawns and garden paths, some stretches of green turf and a sky speckled by daws. The haunts of ancient peace in these feverish times of house-planning and arterial roads belong chiefly to the clergy, who prove themselves worthy inhabitants.

Having referred to Salisbury, let me say that there could not well be two cathedrals so unlike as Salisbury and Winchester not only in style but for the reason that one of them is never lost to view and the other is rarely to be seen from any distant spot. Wherever you are, in Salisbury or in the surrounding country, the cathedral spire pierces the sky. But Winchester's low central tower, in its hollow amid the hills, sinks into secrecy. You fail to find it even from the school playing fields, even from St. Cross across the meadows. It is thus that St. Catherine's crown of wind-swept trees has come to do for Winchester what the cathedral spire does for Salisbury, catching sight of the clump, we say "There is Winchester."

The majority of travellers go to Winchester to see the cathedral and the school. But it is wholly a *Hill Musée* too, and yet instantaneously in touch with some of the wildest country in southern England. A

*The old Close Gateway with its wooden doors that have hung for five hundred years. The half-timbered building is part of Cheyney Court, where formerly the Bishops of Winchester administered the law.*

Photo: Will F. Taylor

city entirely surrounded by game. Parts of its old wall remain just outside which, on the west, is the castle where Alfred the Great held his parliament and where to-day justice is administered. The noble hall built with supreme massiveness, has been beautified and dignified by the addition of the statue of Queen Victoria by Sir Alfred Gilbert, wherein you may recognize the same hand but firmer, that has just given London the Queen Alexandra Memorial with the same sensitive quality in the bronze. Above it hangs a circular wooden disc, painted in sections, which for some foolish reason it is customary to describe (and to photograph) as King Arthur's Round Table.

If you open the little south door of this Great Hall you will find a few vestiges of the palace which Sir Christopher Wren began for Charles II.

I am not in a position to state whether Canterbury turned the upper part of her West Gate into a museum before Winchester did, or whether Winchester's West Gate took the lead, but the similarity of the two portals and their possessions is very peculiar. Both serve as entrances, both specialize in the machinery of punishment and in old armour, both invite you to the roof for a view of the city. Winchester has the iron framework used for hanging in chains, hooks for pulling thatch off burning houses; a most malignant man-trap, and one of the jack-boots which Charles II left at the Deanery after a visit there. The West Gate is at the top of Winchester's narrow High Street; at the foot, just by the glorious statue of Alfred the Great, is another museum, where you may see the birds of Hampshire stuffed and set in their natural surroundings, and a group of nests of small inoffensive twitterers on whom that impudent non-householder the cuckoo, has imposed an egg.

Photo: Neil P. Taylor

*The Perpendicular west front of the Cathedral, dating from 1350. It is supposed that the low balcony over the door was used as a musicians' gallery at festivals.*

The similarity of the two West Gate museums is not the only reason for thinking of Canterbury while one is at Winchester. They have an actual link, or line of communication, which still exists, as old as the thirteenth century. We saw at Canterbury the stone that marks the spot where the shrine of Thomas Becket was placed, the objective of every traveller along the Pilgrims' Way. It was at Winchester that the Way started. No doubt the devout, foot sore but hopeful, were to be seen plodding towards Canterbury every day of the year, but the two great formal Pilgrimages, comparable to the processions to Lourdes at the present time, contemplated reaching Canterbury either on or before December 29th, the anniversary of the murder of the saint,

*Beaufort's Tower gateway of St Cross Hospital At the porter's hatch below, the famous dole of a horn of beer and a piece of bread is still given on demand to every wayfarer*

or on July 7th, the anniversary of his translation. The Way ran from Winchester to Alresford, Ropley, and Farnham, where the Bishops of Winchester had a Palace, and so on across Surrey and Kent.

In writing of Canterbury I said that to recommend her antiquity she was in no need of assistance from the alluring word "olde. Nor is Winchester, but Winchester has succumbed to the temptation Side by side I found 'Ye Olde Booke Shoppe' and "Ye Olde Brasse Shoppe" with Winchester's various devices—such as the symbol of St. Cross and the famous Trusty Servant — reproduced as metal souvenirs.

It is between these aggressively ancient establishments and the entrance to the Close that the little Winchester Museum is situated, the custodian of which is one of the most willing and best-informed men who ever was put in charge of Roman remains. Not merely Roman Saxon and Norman and mediæval, and all indigenous, and some of the oldest and most interesting unearthed recently by the workmen digging foundations for the new Woolworth building in the High Street. Thus do the ages meet. Among the Woolworth *trouvailles* is a Saxon hand-mill, or quern, made of an upper and a nether stone. In one of the glass-cases is a Norman leaden treasure-vessel which, when found, contained six thousand silver coins of the reigns of the Conqueror and his son, the theory being that it was buried in order that that son the predatory and avaricious Rufus, might not sequester them. Two of the coins are shown rather like pretty sixpences of our own day Here too is a section of one of the beech trunks forming the cathedral foundations at the end of the twelfth century, here is a section of mosaic pavement from the old Roman palace where Little Minster Street now stands, a narrow thoroughfare to-day given over to garages And, coming nearer to our hearts and bosoms, here are a bead bag and a bead purse and a needle-case which once belonged to Miss Austen

But although downstairs there is no exhibit which the custodian does not

lovingly demonstrate, it is upstairs that he longs to lead you, because of the remarkable collection of flint implements and weapons which he himself arranged and can enlarge upon in the liveliest manner. The history of mankind, for two hundred thousand years, is in this room. A staggering apartment, and it is well to bring oneself back to simpler emotions by looking at the specimens of Hampshire wild flowers which are renewed every few days, among them the fly orchis and the spider orchis and other miracles of the chalk.

Winchester is not such a meeting-place of the waters as Salisbury, but under the old bridge at the foot of the High Street gurgles the speedy Itchen, beside which for a while, you can walk on your way to St Cross and perhaps see a kingfisher as you go. Above and before you to the left rises St Catherine's Hill, St Cross is the square church on the right, across the lush grass, and the charity of St Cross is one of the oldest and most picturesque in England, a country rich in such endowments. Within its walls live thirteen brethren in, I trust, amity, some of them, those in the mulberry uniform, coming from the universities, and the others, those in black, from the rank and file of life. Every one is marked by the silver [illegible] emblem. St Cross also feeds many poor people every day, and any way-farer wishing for a piece of bread and a tankard of beer may have it for the asking. I had some myself. The place, which dates from the twelfth century, is a refuge indeed and, on my last visit, sitting outside one of the residences while church service was in progress, and smoking a pipe in the hot sun, I realised that were enough votes given me I could very naturally subside into the brotherhood. There is yet time.

After church I joined a party that was being conveyed round the premises—three visitors from the north of England and two Americans—and we saw all the show pieces and were told their history. Not least interesting to me was the rude and, I should guess, painfully uncomfortable, chair in which William of Wykeham, one of the controllers of St Cross, used to sit, and resting my hand on the arm I hoped that a finer courtesy and more consideration for others might one day be mine. Should there be any choice of guides, my advice is that you ask for the services of John Turner, a brother of eighty-four with a certain humour of his own. He had been, he said, a London pastry-cook before he had the good fortune to be selected as an inmate here, and in his rooms, to which he led us, I saw his photograph as a vigorous man of middle age with the photograph of one of his confectionery masterpieces beside him and in a glass-case was the plaster-of-Paris symbolism which he had once designed for a christening cake. Among his pictures I noticed a reproduction of "The Boyhood of Raleigh," painted by a namesake of my own, but there was no sign of "To-morrow will be Friday" by Dendy Sadler, which ought to have been there because it was at St Cross that it was painted. Although John Turner is an informative companion I failed to get from him the history of the very attractive group of the Virgin and Child over the gate.

WINCHESTER is a pleasant city with kindly people in it, and in the cathedral is the most impressive white nave I have ever seen, and in the midst of the school cloisters, that gem, the chantry, one of the most exquisite little buildings I have ever seen, but I came away from my last visit almost wishing I had never been there. I had been walking about the school. I had rejoiced in the little isolated chantry, I had sat in the chapel and let all the rich colours of the great window gladden the eyes. I had loitered admiringly and reverently in the cloisters recently built by Sir Herbert Baker as a War Memorial—perfect in their scheme and design and material—and wondered if the architect, when at school here, ever as a boy had the faintest idea that he would one day add to these historic buildings a historic building of his own, and then I strolled on to the playing fields and watched several cricket matches at once and again marvelled how often it happens that the bowlers do not coincide in their attack, so that one can see first one batsman squaring up to the ball and then another.

It was a fine afternoon, and there were anglers in the distance by the Itchen and fleecy clouds intensified the blue over St Catherine's Hill. Strangers are treated with the courtesy of inattention in this place where the motto "Manners maketh man" was first applied, and I was permitted to sit in front of the pavilion as though it were my right. In course of time there came to the same seat one whom I knew to be a master because hats were doffed to him.

"Were you at school here?" after a while he asked me. Never have I said No with more reluctance and regret.

# HER LOST CHANCE

## H. de VERE STACPOOLE

*Illustrated by FRANK OLDHAM*

"There are two Mouse Holes in England," said he.

"Excuse me, I said, "more likely two thousand million."

Mr Nailer (that was his name in the visitors' book) looked round the lounge as though in search of assistance for a weaker intelligence.

"I was not referring to holes bored by mice in wainscotings," said he. "I was referring to Mouse Holes, names of places, though one of them is not pronounced Mouse Hole by the natives but Muzzle. Well as I was saying, just as there are two Yarmouths and two Newcastles, there are two Mouse Holes, and the one I am referring to as the place where Captain Shand lived isn't the Muzzle one, but situated on the same stretch of the southern coast only more to the eastwards."

The lounge of the Anchor Hotel almost atones for the horribleness of general hotel lounges. It is small. When the glass door opens—generally pushed against the wind—the place becomes filled with the noise and scent of the sea. Even with the door shut the scent is there, mixed with the holiday smell of Harris tweed overcoats and oilskins and the tang of wreck wood burning in the broad grate opposite the stairs.

"The Captain," continued Mr Nailer, "had bought a cottage on the rise just above the harbour. I fell in with him when I was making a holiday there, staying in the cottage next to his, and we'd talk over the garden hedge of an evening. And then I got to going in to his place for a smoke and a glass of cyder. His daughter Susan used to draw the cyder for us in a jug, and we'd talk of old days when ships were ships and sailors were sailors, not stokers and engine-drivers; and though I didn't scarcely know the difference between a topsail yard and a back stay, I stuck it for the sake of Susan.

"It didn't matter that I was a commercial traveller interested in cotton goods, it was all the same to Captain Shand, as long as he could get his grouse against steamships off his chest and spin his old yarns without being interrupted, with Susan sitting there doing her knitting and me catching her eye now and again. She was one of the prettiest girls I'd ever seen, and the handiest. They had a boat, and she'd think nothing of going out after the mackerel and by herself or putting out lobster pots. And sometimes in the visitor season she'd take out people for a sail at a bob a nob, for the old Cap and she hadn't more than a hundred and fifty a year or so to live on, and every trifle came in handy.

Copyright, 1902, by H. de Vere Stacpoole.

*Susan," I said, "I hope you'll be happy with him, and it's all no affair of mine, but may I ask why you are travelling up separately from him?"*

Poor Lord no, they were rich enough to be happy You don t want money to be happy as long as you have enough to feed you and keep you, no income tax no servant worries, rates and taxes next to nothing fish out of the sea, vegetables out of your garden—the Cap. used to do the gardening to keep him in health — half-a-dozen hens in a coop—why, those two hadn t to spend a penny except on bread and butter and tea and a mutton chop now and then and cyder and tobacco—they were saving money, and yet that spiflicated old jugg ns must go in for smuggling

II

MR NAILER, relapsing into silence for a moment, tapped out his pipe against his heel with no regard for the matting and with an energy as though the thing had been an accomplice in the doings of Captain Shand.

It's as true as I'm lighting this match (Nailer went on a moment later). Him with a daughter and all, *and* these times, with wireless and telephones and police motor-cyclists and all sorts of nose hounds ready to follow any track bigger'n a flea's.

I got an inkling of the old man's meaning from his talk. The Shands were an old Mouse Hole family, and every Mouse Hole family for generations back had been so to speak, in opposition to the Customs. Of course, in recent times there had been nothing doing, between one thing and another, but in the old days tobacco and French brandy and lace had been the basis, one might say, of the main industry of the place. And, seeing a piece in the paper that smuggling was beginning to push its head up again, one evening as we were sitting smoking in the garden I asked him casually and just for something to say whether there was anything doing that way now, and the only answer he made me was to shut his left eye.

That gave me a jolt.

It was as much as to say that something was going on and he was in it, at least that's how it seemed to me.

I was thinking of the girl and what would happen if the old chap was fooling with the Customs and there was any row. Of course, in the nature of things, even supposing there was a bit of smuggling going on, it couldn't amount to much. Still, if you like anyone you don't want to see any trouble touching her, however small the trouble may be, and I'd come to care for Susan Shand enough to have married her almost, and all in little more than ten days.

However, I had something else to bother myself with, for next day after that talk with the Captain I met Susan on the west cliff and she was walking with a chap in a blue serge suit and no hat. Young chap with black hair fixed back with pomatum, looked like a gigolo out of a job—with Susan, mind you, walking arm-in-arm. And when they seen me coming in the distance they unlinked, and when I passed them—

Good-day, Mr Nailer,' said she, without stopping to introduce me, and as I walked on I thought I heard the fellow laugh as though she'd said something or another about me to him. Worse than all that, I felt the chap to be a wrong un.

You see, I'd been knocking round the world so long and among all sorts that I'd got to be able to size up people pretty sharply, but I hadn't time to think before I closed up with a fellow who was coming towards me. He stopped to make a remark about the weather and then he said, casual like, 'That young lady gone along there you seem to know her. It's some years since I have been in this place—is she, by any means, a Miss Timmins, daughter of my old friend, Job Timmins, who used to live here, but who has since died, I believe?'

'No,' I said. 'She's a Miss Shand, daughter of Captain Shand.'

'Oh,' says he, 'Captain Shand. I've heard of him,' and then he talks for a minute and I could see he was trying to pump me about the old Cap. Very cautious he was, and asking nothing direct, but pumping all the same. Then he bid me good day and walked on.

He was a stout chap of fifty or so, looked like a parson at least, he had a sort of parson's collar on—but he wasn't a parson. He had an eye like a steel drill, and I said to myself, 'that chap is a detective.'

You see, the idea of smuggling had mixed up in the business with the idea of the Captain and this chap asking questions about him.

I sat down on a seat close by and lit a pipe and thought over the matter, and as I was sitting there smoking and thinking who should I see but Susan. She'd left the chap she'd been with and was coming back towards me.

She came right up and sat down by me and asked me wasn't it a lovely day and wasn't the Bay beautiful seen just from here and then. 'That was Mr Summers you saw me with,' said she, 'he comes down here sometimes to see dad. Dad's very old-fashioned,' says she, 'so don't please tell him you saw us walking arm in arm, will you, Mr Nailer?'

'No,' I said. 'I won't, but who is he?'

'You mean Jack?' she asked.

'Yes,' I said. 'If that's his name. What does he come to see your father about?'

'Oh, I don't know,' she said. 'Father has business with him up in London, and he comes down to see father and that's how I know him.'

'Do you know what's his business?' I asked. 'I mean, what's his trade or profession?'

'Mr Summers hasn't anything to do with trade,' says she, 'he's a chemical manufacturer, I believe. Why do you ask?'

'Oh, it's nothing,' I said, 'just wanted to know. He's a nice-looking chap, isn't he?'

She gave a sigh and looked out over the

sea as though she were looking all over the world to see anything handsomer than that chap, and I knew by her manner she was skewered.

It didn't trouble me much. I had always looked on her with honourable intentions, and the fact that she was deceiving her old father, which she evidently was by spooning with this chap and asking me not to tell, turned my mind right round.

I'm not the chap to buy a piece of cotton goods that won't wash, and if you ask me what marriage is it's nothing more or less than a laundry, and when you see a chap landed in the Divorce Court you'll find it's because the petticoat he has chosen for a wife hasn't stood the wash.

Give me a plain woman that will wash before any of your fancy goods. But leaving all that aside and looking at the girl just as a friend, I didn't want to see her get into trouble nor the old Cap neither, and late that afternoon meeting him down by the harbour side, I began to tackle the business in my own way.

'Look here, Cap,' I said. 'Did you ever know anyone living here by the name of Timmins?'

'Timmins,' said he. 'No,' said he. 'I've known this place sixty years and every man, woman, and child in it, and there ain't been no Timmins living here. Why do you ask?'

'Well, I met a chap on the cliff this morning,' I said, 'and he got into conversation with me saying he'd had a friend here named Timmins—which was evidently a lie just to break the ground, for he went on then to ask questions about you, seemed to be trying to pump me about you and your affairs—and then,' says I, putting in a lie, 'he began talking of contraband, wanting to know if I thought anything was being done that way hereabouts. I don't know if any of your friends are having a dip into the business,' I went on, 'so I just thought I'd tell you.'

'What was the chap like?' asked the Captain, and I could see by his manner I'd hit the bull's-eye.

'Well,' I said, 'if you ask me, I'd say he was the nikest thing to a detective I've seen for a long while.'

'Kim in here,' said the Cap., and taking me by the arm he led me into the Bow and Anchor, and then he calls for a tot of rum for himself and a dry ginger for me, and we sat in the bar-parlour, which was empty, and after a minute or two he opened out.

He said there was a bit of contraband being run, but it was nothing much and quite small in quantity, seeing it was only stuff called saccharine. A French fishing boat would put in sometimes and leave a can of it sunk and marked with a lobster pot afloat.

'A young chap I know that's in the chemical trade takes it off me,' said he. 'It's used by brewers and such.'

'What's the young chap's name?' I asked.

'Name of Summers,' says he. 'He came down here last year for a holiday and put me wise to the business. He knows a French firm that handles the stuff, and it's simple as pie. When I fish up a lobster pot I send him a line telling him and he comes down here and takes it off me, but if there's anything in this what you say I've done with the business.'

'Is he down here now?' I asked.

'Yes,' says he, 'he came down yesterday and he's staying at Rock Cottage over there.'

'Did he come down to get a can of the stuff from you?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said, 'he got it last night. No, he didn't call at my place for it. Susan just took it over to him.'

'Now look here, Cap.,' I said, 'I'm not bothering over the matter and I don't see why you shouldn't turn a penny over a tin of stuff like that, but the question is about Susan. You know what young people are, is this chap all right for a girl to be meeting like that? You see, it's all a wee bit on the shady side, and though you mayn't mind trading with the chap, is he the sort of man you'd care to see your daughter fond of?'

He laughed at that.

'Fond of him,' said he. 'Why, Susan hasn't met him more than half-a-dozen times. Sort of chap? Course he isn't; he's not in our way of life, for one thing; nother thing, I don't care for him, not to make what you call a friend of—only just in business. Nother thing, Susan hasn't any eyes for men, she's not that sort—what's gone putting all that stuff in your head?'

'Oh, I was only just thinking,' says I. 'Anyhow, if I was you, and between man and man, I'd knock off the saccharine business, after what I've told you.'

'I'm done with it,' said the Cap., and I could see he was frightened and so speaking the truth. 'I won't have any more truck with Summers, and, anyhow, if they were to pounce on me this blessed minute, they could do nothing, for I haven't an ounce of the stuff at my place.'

I didn't say any more. I couldn't go back on what I'd said to Susan, and anyhow it wasn't my job to give her away to her dad. But I wasn't happy, and next morning early I took the branch train over to Melchester.

I knew the place, having travelled there

with goods, and I knew Collins, who's manager to a big brewery there. I wanted to get at the ins and outs of the saccharine business and he'd be able to tell me.

II

HE'D just reached his office and was opening his morning letters when I was shown in. He gave me good-day and asked what he could do for me and I told him my trouble without mentioning names or places putting it all vague, as you may say, and when I had done he laughed.

Then he told me something that raised the hair on my head, and which I'll tell you in a minute and I left him and made for the station to get the train back to Mouse Hole.

It hadn't come in yet, and on the opposite platform there was a crowd of people waiting for the London express, and amongst them who should I see but Susan with an attaché case in her hand.

A little away from her, just as if he had nothing to do with her, was the chap

*They laid her down with a rolled up rug under her head, and then they opened Jack's portmanteau, and after that her attaché case.*

Summers with his luggage, which was just a small portmanteau, on the ground beside him.

I watched for one moment and that was enough. I could see that he and she were travelling separate without speaking to one another, by the same train, and that meant that Susan was doing a bolt with him.

It all went through my head in the tick of a clock. She was doing a bolt with this bounder—arm in arm with him one day and not speaking to him the next, yet travelling with him on the same train to the same place.

The old Cap. knew nothing of her going to London or he'd have spoken to me of it last night, for I'd dropped in to have a pipe with him after having parted with him at the Bowl and Anchor.

No, the thing was plain she'd proved herself yesterday able to deceive her father, and now she was proving herself able to run off and leave him with nothing to stop her apparently, but—by Gosh! there he was, though the chap I'd put down as a detective yesterday, big and stout in his half clerical get-up with an umbrella under his arm, buying a newspaper at the bookstall.

Well, you may think! Here was a stage play for you. Why if I hadn't any interest in the girl herself I'd have paid the fare to London just as one pays for a theatre ticket to see a show, and this was going to be a show, a holy show when things developed and that 'tec got his claws into the situation. And I was thinking all that as I raced through the subway to find the main platform and up to the ticket office, which I reached just on the whistle of the express. By good luck I had enough money on me and next minute I was on the platform mixed with the crowd that was getting into the train, and the next I was in the train and we were moving out.

I walked down the corridor and then I saw Susan in a compartment by herself, and going along a bit further I saw Summers in a first smoker lighting a cigarette, and in the same compartment the clerical-looking feller opening his newspaper, and it came to me like a punch on the head that as soon as we reached Waterloo platform that chap Summers would be arrested.

I knew it as sure as sure, and what Collins had said came to me—the thing I told you that raised my hair—he'd said, "Dope is the only thing that pays to smuggle in that

small way, that's to say, consume, and the penalties are frightful big.'

IV

I STOOD there in the corridor for a minute, trying to wrestle with the situation.

I knew quite well that Susan would be had. That tec was no fool he'd seen her with the chap and she'd be pinched for evidence, sure if the dust-up came at Waterloo.

Then the question came to me like a bullet. "Has that brute given her the dope to carry? Is it in that attaché case of hers? Was I wrong in thinking she's running away with him?"

I came along back down the corridor and into Susan's compartment.

Why, Mr Nailer," said she. "Where have you come from?"

Oh, I'm just going up to town," said I, "but see here, Susan," I said, "I want to have a word with you. I saw you on the platform with Mr Summers and you weren't speaking to him; he's here in the train, going up to town with you. You asked me not to tell your dad you were walking arm-in-arm with him yesterday. Now see here, Susan, what's the meaning of it all—are you running away with him?"

Oh, Mr Nailer," says she, "I'm going to be married to Mr Summers, and we'd arranged not to tell dad till it was over. I'll send him a telegram this afternoon, and day after to-morrow we are going back to Mouse Hole to see him and we'll have our honeymoon at Melchester.

But, good gracious," I said, "you haven't had your banns put out or anything, have you—else your dad would know?"

Mr Summers has got a special licence," says she, "and made all the arrangements."

Yes, I thought, and the Archbishop of Canterbury himself to do the splicing. But I didn't say anything for a minute. The special licence he held me. I was up against the plain fact that Summers was what he looked, a young, greasy, pomatumed crook, a million to one a dope smuggler. There was more than that. The situation had begun building itself up in my mind.

Summers had been on this game with old Shand a good while, Lord knows how many tins of cocaine had been fetched to London by him. Well, now it was quite evident that this was the last deal, else Summers wouldn't have snatched Susan away from the old man like this. Most likely the gang was getting nervous of playing any more on this special patch and that Summers winding up the business, as you may say, had snatched Susan for perks. He'd evidently been fooling with her for a long time, got her hypnotised so's he'd only to whistle for her to follow him.

Also it struck me he'd likely given her the stuff to carry up to town for safety's sake, and that she had it in that attaché case. I wanted to make sure of all this.

Susan," I said, "I hope you'll be happy with him, and it's all no affair of mine, but may I ask what's your plan when you get to Waterloo? I mean you are travelling up separate from him—why are you doing that?"

Well, you see," says Susan, "Mr Summers is very careful, and he was afraid if any of the Melchester people who know me saw us travelling together it might mean scandal—you know the way people talk—so we've arranged not to see each other till we meet at the place where we're going to have luncheon. I'm going to take a taxi-cab there, and he'll take another."

Well," I said, "that's nice of him to be so careful of your reputation as that. Well, now I want you to do something. He's in a compartment along down the corridor there and there's a man in the same compartment I think I saw the man at Mouse Hole yesterday. I want you to walk down the corridor and look in at them as you go by their compartment, and then come back and tell me if you know the man by sight. Now, don't ask me any questions but just do as I tell you—they needn't notice you looking in."

Off she went, and no sooner was she gone than I whipped the attaché case off the rack and opened it. Fortunately it was unlocked. And there among a lot of woman's gear was the stuff sure enough, a big square brown-paper parcel. I tore a bit of the paper and the tin showed clear underneath, and I hadn't more than got the attaché case up again on the rack before she came back.

I saw the gentleman you spoke of, he's talking to Jack," said she. "What about him?"

Only this, Susan," I said. "He's a detective, I believe. It's just this way, Susan, your dad has been dealing with Mr Summers for a long time past, hasn't he? Mr Summers has come down to fetch parcels of stuff up to London. Your father told me all about it last night that it was just a bit of saccharine he was helping past the Customs for Mr Summers to use in his chemical business and to sell to brewers and such, isn't that so?"

Susan laughed. "Yes," she said, "and what about it?" Taking it as right as that, being Mouse Hole bred and all Mouse Hole folk being smugglers, as you may say, under their skins.

Only this, I said. "Mr Summers has told a lie to your father, it's not saccharine

that your unfortunate old dad has been gett ng out of lobster pots and handing over to Mr Summers, as he ca ls h mself but cocaine" I was so sure of my facts that I said it definite "Cocaine, poison that k ls the bodies and souls of men"

Susan swa lowed once or twice and then she burst out saying she didn t be eve me that I had no right to say such things, that I was a false fr end and so forth regular insulting she was, and "All right" I says "I've done my best and you ll see, and then we said nothing more til we were going through Clapham Junction, when along came the t c looking into the compartments and when he reached ours he comes and takes a seat

Miss Shand ?" says he

'Yes, says Susan

A friend of yours is in one of the forward compartments, says he, a Mr Summers, the gentleman you were walking arm n arm with yesterday if you remember My name is Detective-Inspector Sleet I saw you both on the platform at Melchester, and I just want to know how t happens that you are both travel ng up to London as though you were strangers to one another

That s no business of yours, says Susan, though I could see she was fr ghtened but if you want to know' she says, "it s because we are going to get married – pr vate It s no one s business but ours and we don t want people to talk of our travell ng together

Well," says Sleet, "that doesn t agree with what he says, for when I told h m I saw the young lady he was so charming with on the platform at Melchester and that she was in the train now going to London, and asked why you were travelling separate seeing you were such chums, he told me he had quarrelled and done with you for the reason that you and your father had wanted him to help you to evade the Customs.

He could never have said that! cr ed Susan.

All right, said Sleet, "you can both explain at Waterloo he won t run away for I ve left him in charge of the guard—and here we are" And sure enough we were running into the station

There were two C I.D men on the plat form and the three of us—for they made me come, too—were all marched off into the station-master s office, and then there was a scene.

Jack," cries Susan, "what is all this ?'

I told you yesterday' says the greasy bounder, that I wanted to have no more to do with you or your father You tried to make a tool of me, that s all I know," and at that she lets a whoop out of her and faints

THEY lays her down with a rolled-up rug under her head and then they opens Jack s portmanteau nothing much in it but a pomatum pot and a suit of old pyjamas. Then they opens her attaché case nothing in it but the female truck for the very good reason that when I was alone with it I d hove the lot of stuff out of the carriage w ndow But Summers didn t get off. He was wanted on another charge, and whilst they were taking him away and recuperating Susan I had a word with Sleet

That chap wasn't a bit fooled These men know everything He knew I had no hand in the business, and he quite under stood how it lay with me when I told h m I d suspected Summers of being a wrong 'un and jumped on the train to save Susan from him

He knew for certain that old Shand had been roped in by Summers, and he knew for certain that the dope was coming up to London—but where was it ?

It wasn t in Summers's portmanteau, be cause he had been keeping a tight eye on Summers, therefore it must have been in Susan s attaché case—but it wasn t

It s that blessed girl has queered my pitch says he You remember the story when they cut Queen El zabeth open after she was dead and found 'Calais' written on her heart, it s the same with us tecs, cut us open and you ll find girls written on our hearts or what s left of them for they are the ones that spoil the game more times than I can be tell ng you of"—and maybe he was right for if I hadn t been a bit sweet on Susan I wouldn t have taken the trouble to heave that stuff out of the window

What became of Susan? Last time I was at Mouse Hole she was married to a curate, and she may be all right, but a girl who l deceive her old father will likely deceive her husband, and as I was saying before, I have doubts if she ll wash

Anyhow though I liked her well enough, she s never had the chance of washing as Mrs. Nailer

# ART AND THE CAMERA

By FRANK RUTTER

ONCE upon a time there was a subject hotly debated in Chelsea, St John's Wood, and other places where artists congregate. "Is Photography an Art?" Controversy raged. Eminent painters and sculptors denounced the work of photographers, enthusiastic supporters of the camera wrote books and articles to forward their just claims. Gradually the storm of argument died away, and to-day there is hardly anybody who would assert that a photographic print cannot be, in its own way, a true work of art.

Art is a matter of selection and arrangement, and so long as the man behind the camera is able to select and arrange, it follows inevitably that it is possible for him to exercise his artistic sensibility.

It may be granted that in some respects the photographer is more limited in arranging Nature than the painter. When he is attempting landscape he cannot shift trees about, from left to right, as Turner and even Constable could do on occasion to improve the composition of a picture. But the man with the camera can do a great deal in the way of arranging even a landscape by manœuvring about to secure the most decorative or spectacular point of view, while in figure subjects he is practically as free to arrange as the painter.

In selecting his subject the photographer of course has just as much freedom as any painter. But what is still more important he has also considerable freedom in selecting *how* he shall interpret his chosen subject. He can choose his range, he can choose his lighting, and he can even choose to a great extent the amount of detail that his photograph shall reveal.

Now selection in all artistic work is very largely a matter of emphasis and elimination. An optimistic view of the universe instructs us that beauty is latent in all that the sun shines upon. That may very well be true, but Nature is too generous. She has a way of giving us too much more than we can comfortably digest in a work of art. The landscape painter who attempted to put in his picture *everything* that Nature so bountifully spreads before him would be rather in the position of a musician who, as Whistler once said, sat down on the piano.

There must be a good deal of preliminary picking and choosing in the production of any work of art. The photographer is able to exercise these particular artistic functions firstly by niceties of lighting which help him to place emphasis where he thinks it is wanted, and, secondly, by skilful adjustment of the focus so as to eliminate or soften details that he does not wish to insist upon.

These are but a few elementary considerations which should convince any fair-minded person that photography can be an art. But a conviction that a photographic print can be a work of art has been spread abroad not so much by the enunciation of theories, as by the practical demonstration given by the work of the best pictorial photographers.

If students of painting and sculpture flock to Burlington House each May to see what the Royal Academy has to offer them, so, with equal zeal, the devotees of the camera hasten each September to Pall Mall East.

(*Continued on page 73*)

*JOY* *by Waldon Hammond*

*"Position is Everything!" This delightful child-study happily illustrates the importance of a pose in making a picture decorative as well as life-like*

*HUNGARIAN STORKS*
*by Rudolf Balogh.*

*Patience in waiting for the right sky effect has given an arresting design in which the vertical chimney-stack is contrasted with the diagonal of a pillar of cloud.*

*A keen and witty sense of proportion is displayed in the most original subject, "Difficult Task," by Erno Vadas, which has a note of monumental grandeur in the diagonal lines of the steps.*

*An intense concentration of light on the fledglings, and simplicity in the background, give exceptional brilliance to the amusing and masterly record of bird life "Great Expectations," by B. Hutchings.*

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*FIGURE-HEAD*
*by Rosalind Mangot*

*Delicacy and refinement are noteworthy qualities in this admirably placed profile of a nymph, whose wind-blown locks remind us of one of Botticelli's creations*

to view, for their delight and instruction the London Salon of Photography Would it be utter heresy to hazard an opinion that the standard of the second is higher than that of the first? Certainly, there can be no disrespect shown to the older institution in pointing out that it is probably more difficult to get a photograph accepted by the London Salon than to have a picture hung at the Royal Academy In the first place the wall space available for the display of photographs is very much more limited and in the second place, while the Academy is primarily a national display the London Salon is an international exhibition to which prints are sent from all parts of the world

The photographs illustrating this article have all been chosen from the London Salon of Photography in 1932 and they demonstrate in a very remarkable manner the genuine artistic qualities in the best pictorial photographs of to-day

IF I were asked to say what is the most important quality that goes to the making of a successful pictorial photograph I should hesitate between Composition and Lighting. Composition is immensely important because it is the structure underlying the whole picture and the arrangement is a dominant factor in securing a decorative effect But then lighting also is supremely important The photographer draws with light, paints his tones with light models his forms with light, gets his emphasis with light —does nearly everything with light It is by his sense of lighting that he endows his print with its most subtle and exquisite beauties, and in no respect does he exercise his faculty of selection with more vital results than by waiting for the ideal moment of illumination

But if I were asked to say what is the most necessary virtue for a pictorial photographer to possess, then I should have little hesitation in naming that virtue as Patience

Patience is necessary for good results even when the photographer is working indoors in a studio. But when he is working out-of-doors, a well-nigh inexhaustible patience becomes an imperative necessity Do you imagine that Mr Rudolf Balogh had the extraordinary luck to go out with his camera and find straightaway the birds chimney-stack, and clouds exactly as he has shown them in his beautiful "Hungarian Storks"? Not a bit of it every photographer knows that things don't happen like that The birds may have been there but I am sure the cloud was not just so and I can imagine the camera-artist waiting patiently in an agony of anxiety wondering whether the storks would fly away before the clouds came just right for his picture

Patience to wait for the right moment and rapidity in seizing it when it comes, may legitimately be deduced from the photograph entitled Great Expectations. by B. Hutchings This most amusing and decorative bird subject may also be cited as a masterly exposition of emphasis and elimination in camera work An intense concentration of light on the heads of the two fledglings and the twig on which they are perched dramatically accentuates the main elements of both the characterization and the design, while on the other hand the focus is so adjusted as to secure a soft broad effect of simplicity which would certainly have been marred if such details as the breast feathers had been sharply defined instead of being discreetly subordinated

The only golden rule in art is that there is no golden rule For if at times when aiming at a broad effect it is eminently desirable that details should be suppressed and eliminated, so on the other hand there are times when multitudinous detail becomes the very fabric of a picture, the richness of the content embellishing the design So it is with Mr F J Mortimer's print "Aloft" Every rope and chain is of value in building up this wonderfully intricate yet harmonious pattern in line

As showing the variety of effect that can be obtained in figure subjects, two photographs may be effectively contrasted. In "Poise" by Dorothy Wilding, the figure is deliberately simplified The intention is primarily decorative attention being directed to the graceful silhouette of the white figure against the conventional dark background In "The Virago," by Ismay Taylor, on the other hand, the treatment is vigorously realistic Here the decorative element, though present is only perceptible in the slant of the figure which aids the design as well as enforcing the expression of character but the outstanding feature of this print is the magnificent modelling of the figure emphasized by the bold accentuation of the high lights

Halfway between the decorative simplicity and restrained modelling of "Poise" and the vigorous realism of "The Virago" is the treatment of the figure in that delightful child-study "Joy," by Waldon Hammond The vision of form is sufficiently soft and broad to give the sense of the figure being seen as a whole, and the eye is not distracted from the general effect by undue insistence on minor details. But the outstanding quality in this picture is the almost miraculous beauty of the pose

Imagine the figure shifted a fraction of an inch to the left or to the right and see how the decorative effect of the whole would suffer

# THE GANGSTER'S WEDDING

IT does not take a lawyer to realize that law and justice can be entirely different things. Why, every common man in the street knows that—the common man knows it sooner than is the only difference.

I was so fervent, so assured that mine was the profession set above all others, even that of medicine, which I had been brought up to think the "noblest" of all professions, that I don't think wild fathers—and mine, the famous Dr. Westcott of Harley Street was pretty wild at my decision—could have deviated me from my course. A Westcott especially of Harley Street—ought to follow in the medical path as a matter of course. I was, like most young men fairly patriotic, but I think I should have won the prize for idiocy amongst them all. I worked hard and passed my examinations with distinction and being blessed with private means—my wild father having died and been gathered to that bourne from which even Harley Street doctors cannot save themselves—I took silk early.

The usual experiences were mine. I lost most of my ordinary practice and had to build up a more spectacular one but by but I had spent years in ardently defending unmarried mothers, street nuisances, drunks, men who gave a blow too much by accident, and clerks who had "borrowed" money with every intention of returning it and—quite inadvertently. I had garnered a certain reputation as a saver of lost causes. Hence my first case after taking silk.

It was a very spectacular affair and came known in the more lurid of our newspapers as "The Gangster's Wedding." The charge, naturally, was not that of bigamy but of murder.

Of course, I was for the defence. My client was not one to do me credit from the point of view of looks, but, on the other hand, I felt I ought to have at least a wreath of laurel in pure gold if I succeeded in freeing him of the charge against him. His name was Antonio Moretti, and he was an ex-Chicago gangster, one of the very few who have succeeded in getting away from God's own country and settling peaceably in humble but comparatively tranquil England.

I never saw a shiftier little animal. He would have been condemned on sight by anyone in a civilized country which I presume is why he left America and came to England. Over here we are as trusting as the beasts of the fields. He had begun life, like so many of his kind in Chicago, by selling newspapers. He took the fancy of a beer baron—such I believe, is the correct title in gangsterland. He rose to being one of his protectors, and always went about in what is, I believe, called a tuxedo, with his hands thrust into both pockets, which bulged suspiciously. A knight have been well with him had he not wished to strike out on a line of his own and become at least a beer baronet. He was lucky to escape from Chicago with his life. By a circuitous route and a forged passport he attained England where he adopted the profession of photographer. He was none of your highly-priced fancy artists, who throw becoming lights and take out unbecoming wrinkles. He took plain straightforward photographs, but they had in them some strange art stry which he could not have avoided had he wished to do so. Had he been brought up in his native Italy he might have made a name for himself as a painter,

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVEN SPURRIER

Copyright 1932, by F. Tennyson Jesse and Harold Kirk

or, I imagine, more probably, a sculptor I never saw a man who built up a group better, or who when taking a single figure had a more perfect line

I saw him first in the room set aside for that purpose in prison and never did I see a human being who assured me more forcibly of the truth sprung on a horrified Victorian world by the late Charles Darwin. He was about five feet three inches in height, his eyes were so dark that they really approached black—that colour impossible to eyes in Nature—but there was amazingly little difference between the pupils and the eyes He rolled these eyes like marbles from side to side, he cast them up to heaven, he gazed passionately at me with them, and yet all the time he seemed to be on the watch for something or somebody He was, in short one of those clever minor criminals whom the police suspect of many things that they are never able to prove, and all his life he had to be upon his guard. His tuxedo, which he had already learned to call a dinner jacket, was his chief wear—I think he considered it suitable to the profession of photographer His manner varied from the over-familiar and the boisterous to the cringing and pitiful

A more unpleasing human being it has never been my lot to see, and I had by then lost my faith in human nature. He was, in fact, so extremely unpleasant that I was almost inclined to think he must be innocent, So many people had gazed at me with limpid blue eyes, had sworn to their honesty, had told me tales that were practically waterproof about their innocence, and I had found that they hardly knew whether they were lying or not. that I felt that there must be a converse truth working somewhere, and that perhaps it had found its home in this unpleasant little man

He burst into tears as he wrung my hand.

"Oh Mista! he cried, 'You come-a to save-a da innocent man."

With some difficulty I extricated my hand from his, and we both sat down

"Not for myself I weep-a," he continued, "but for that povero Scada Ah mio Carlo Such a friend as I have never had, no!"

Carlo Scada was the man he was supposed to have murdered, and I was not particularly impressed

"How could dey think-a I do such a terrible thing?"

Rather coldly I explained matters to him —

"Well the chief reason that they think you are guilty is that they found the revolver in your pocket. In the circumstances you can hardly blame them, can you?"

"But I neva possessa da gun, neva"

"Never?"

"In England, neva. In Chicago, yes Of course in Chicago everyone have a gun De bad man have a gun to shoot the good man and de good man have a gun to protect himself from the bad man, and so everyone have a gun but in England, no, it is not safe to have da gun in England Whatever I do I would not dare have da gun found on me in England. If I kill-a someone it would be different ways, neva da gun"

This seemed to be candid because it was sound sense Every burglar in England knows that he gets a heavier sentence if he is found with a gun on him, even if he has not attempted to use it, than if he is weaponless. It seemed to me that I might after all, get a straightforward story from him, when he suddenly became emotional again

"Oh Mista, I am safe here, yes? I stay here. You can manage that I stay here? I do not have to accept-a de bail?"

I stared at him

"But nobody has offered you bail Mr Moretti. No one is admitted to bail on the capital charge"

"Capital charge?"

"Yes, capital charge. That means if you are accused of murdering someone you cannot get bail"

He breathed a sigh of relief that even I, disillusioned as I was, could not but believe was genuine

# F. TENNYSON JESSE *and* LAURENCE KIRK

Then there is no danger of them pushing me out of da prison?

None at all. I assure you. They wouldn't let you go if you offered them the wealth of the Incas.'

He looked relieved and I saw that his mind was working. I may so put it, on Chicago lines. He was afraid, if they let him out, of being bumped off by another of Carlo's devoted friends. Suddenly his monkey face clouded again and he clutched my arm.

'And da police. When they beat-a me and make me confess, it is not true, see? What I say will not be true.'

'The police, Mr. Moretti, will not molest you in any way.'

He threw back his head and laughed till a touch of hysteria came into his mirth, but it was real laughter all the same. He doubled himself up and clasped his hands to his round little paunch.

'Oh go-a on! Go-a on. Tell me anoda'.

'I promise you you have nothing to fear in that direction.'

He was so surprised that his mirth died away and he stared at me with his popping black eyes as though he was seeing a holy miracle.

'Dat is true?'

'On my word of honour it is true.'

He drew a deep breath.

'Santa Maria, what a country!' He then sat down to weep quite steadily. His reactions had

*"A mighty fine group!" cried someone, when "Say—what's the matter here? Wake up.*

proved too much for him, and I saw that there was nothing to be done with him at the moment. I stood up and gave him a pat on the shoulder.

Now look here, Mr Moretti, what you want is a good night's rest, and I think you'll get it. But to-morrow—understand—to-morrow you will have to help me: you will have to tell me what really happened, do you understand?

Oh yes, I tell-a you everything.

Good. I said, with I am afraid, a touch of sarcasm.

And you gotta me off, eh?'

Well, that rather depends on what you have to tell me. Good night, Mr Moretti.

I noticed anew the foxy look in his eyes as I departed, and thought to myself that were he as clean of sin as a new-born babe he would make a deplorable impression in the box. Nature had certainly not fitted him to play the *rôle* of a falsely-accused man.

I felt very gloomy as I walked home, and still there was something about the little blighter—a curious ingenuousness which

*suddenly there was a chilled and urgent voice "Carlo, what's the matter? . . . Carlo, darling."*

had impressed me, but, to use the language of the theatre, would it get across? To talk alone with a man in a small room is one thing, to put that same man in the fierce light that beats upon the dock and that still fiercer light that beats upon the box is a very different thing.

I went home with a sinking of the heart.

I studied my brief most of the night. It was an absorbing document, and still more absorbing were certain exhibits that cheered me up. I felt at the end that there was, if I handled the case rightly, some chance for my little gangster.

CARLO SCADA had a pretty dirty past even for a Chicago gangster. He was a slim, agile Sicilian, with a soft, puffy face, but a beauty of movement that had to be seen to be believed. If there are—as a reading of the daily papers would lead one to imagine—humans of the underworld who are as the beasts of the jungle, to whom the jungle law, "Save thyself," is the only law known, he was amongst them. Otherwise he had at least ten murders to his credit. And he was certainly a brilliant organizer. Moreover he showed finally that he possessed the rarest kind of ability of all. He knew when to stop. Like the greatest tennis players, he gave up the game when he was still at the very top of his form. Like Variety, he decided to settle in England, when he abdicated. And unlike most gamblers, he got away with a very large fortune.

The only thing he wasn't sure of when he hooked his suite on the liner was whether he would be allowed to land in England, or whether he would be pushed off as an undesirable. Scotland Yard certainly did not want him. However none of his crimes had ever been proved against him, and they had very little to go on. After a rather sticky half-hour with the Immigration Authorities at Southampton, he was finally allowed in, and from then on his progress was like the Lord Mayor's Show.

Amongst the many special correspondents waiting to welcome him to this country at Southampton was the Honourable Baba Heston. Baba Heston was the darling of the Press and the despair of her own family. She had jumped into the limelight at the early age of eighteen, and her vivacity, her originality, her copper hair, her advertising and, some added, her complete lack of all decency had kept her there ever since.

She was lucky in being the possessor of a perfect camera face. Often when people met her in the flesh they were disappointed. Her modeling was so perfect that it could not make her but appear more beautiful in a photograph than she was in real life, when she sometimes seemed small and insignificant.

Baba had a heart-shaped face with a Byronic cleft in her chin, which was over-pointed. She had rather high cheekbones and such perfect planes round the nostrils that even men who were not artists knew that they were looking upon something extraordinary. She had, in fact, that subtle wrongness in her face which makes for real beauty. Her upper lip was a little too short, her brow too wide for her pointed chin, but that was why you recognized Baba Heston if you saw the worst photograph possible printed through a thick gauze screen in a Sunday paper. She had individuality, that thing which is not compatible with perfect beauty—a dull matter of measurements—but which is essentially an affair of just the right irregularities.

Baba was as ruthless in her own way as Scada was in his. And her unfortunate father, the ninth Viscount, who was a scholarly man of quiet tastes, hardly dared open a newspaper for fear of what he might read about Baba, or what was even worse, by her.

Anyhow, she seized on to Scada at Southampton and appointed herself his publicity manager. Scada, who was a bit of a snob, raised no objections. He was very anxious to get in with the right people in England, and dazzled by the Hon. in front of Baba's name, he fondly imagined that she was likely to do this for him. Moreover he liked London. It was pleasant to walk along the streets instead of dashing through them in a bullet-proof car. Pleasant, too, to lunch at a restaurant without keeping one hand in the hip-pocket and one eye on the door. And Baba arranged everything. In fact, she was seen with him so frequently at dances and theatres, that the malicious began to whisper that Baba's next exploit would be to marry the reformed gangster.

Which was precisely what Baba did.

She wanted the ceremony to be performed at St. Margaret's, Westminster, but somehow or another it couldn't quite be arranged. They had in the end to come down to an ordinary church (it was Scada who insisted on a church—Catholic or Protestant, he didn't mind much as long as it was a large church), but the reception afterwards was held in great style at Baridge's.

Except for Nigel, Baba's young brother, the bride's family were conspicuous by their absence. They stayed in their country houses, and moaned and held their heads. But that did not prevent it being a very gay affair. Baba had plenty of friends of her own, really cheery people picked up anywhere, and Scada was astonished to find how easy the English "aristocracy" was to get on with. Just like his own crowd. And almost as thirsty. But fortunately the

*As one of the constables stopped Moretti at the door, the other one put his hand into his side pocket and drew out a neat little revolver*

champagne was abundant. For though the ninth Viscount did not give the bride away Baba managed to look desperately virginal in her white satin, her shining auburn hair drawn down Madonna-wise each side of her heart-shaped face, and Scuda arranged the reception in true Chicago style.

Meanwhile, in the midst of the speeches and the deafening applause, Moretti in his dinner-jacket was arranging his camera, in a little room off the lounge, for the wedding group. It was really more a passage than a room—folding doors at either end and two windows with drawn curtains on the right hand side looking into the well of the hotel. Moretti was very pleased at getting the job. As soon as he had heard of the engagement he had called

to Scada and asked to be allowed to take the photograph for old time's sake. Scada had graciously shaken his hand and consented. And now Moretti, having got everything ready, took off his dinner jacket and hung it on a hook between the two windows for he felt more businesslike in his shirt-sleeves. Then he looked at his watch and rang the bell.

As there was no answer he went out, still in his shirt-sleeves, to find the best man. For he was determined that the bridal party should not escape without having their photograph taken. A few minutes later he came running back, pursued by the whole mob (they wanted to know why he hadn't got a wedding garment on) and there was a violent struggle in the room as he tried to defend his precious camera. However a word from Scada himself stopped the rioting. The intruders were turned out, the door was locked, and they settled down to the serious business of the photograph, while the rest of the party made cat-calls and sang songs outside.

The chairs were grouped at the far end of the room opposite the door they had come in by, and facing it. Baba was to be the only woman in the picture. Her daring sense of originality had already been shown in the choice of two beautiful young men in lavender trousers to carry her train instead of bridesmaids, at the church; and she proposed to complete the effect by being the only woman in the wedding group. She sat in the middle with Scada like a sleek member of the larger cat tribe on one side, and the Comte de Trèfles, who was said to be his predecessor, on the other. The two outer chairs were occupied by other friends of Baba's. The beautiful young men in lavender trousers sat in front on the floor, while the best man and two other ex-members of Scada's bodyguard stood between the chairs behind. Altogether a very pretty picture.

Moretti found it almost impossible to make himself heard above the din going on outside. However he hopped about like a little robin, setting chins at the right angle. He did not need to give any assistance to Baba, who knew how to get the best results, but Scada himself was rather fidgety and troublesome.

Just as Moretti had at last arranged him to look something like a bridegroom, he spoilt it all by turning to Baba.

"Say, Baby, where's the Honourable Nigel? He oughta be here."

Baba shrugged her elegant shoulders.

"Oh, I expect he's too tight. Let's get on with it."

Scada laboriously put his face back into the correct plaster cast. Moretti stood waiting by the camera with his hand up, for the exact moment. Then there was the pff-pff of the flash-light and the deed was done.

The mob was now hammering on the door outside, but the ordeal was not yet over. Moretti insisted on another exposure.

Scada arranged his scowl into a smile once more. Moretti again stood waiting, making little signals. Then pff-pff, and again the deed was done.

"Well, thank heaven, that's over!"

"Attaboy. That's a mighty fine group!"

"Really quite historic!" simpered one of the lavender trousers.

Then suddenly there was another chilled and urgent voice.

"Say—what's the matter here? Wake up, Carlo, what's the matter? Carlo darling!"

But Carlo seemed very far from well. In fact he was dead, with a bullet through his heart.

Baba had fainted. Moretti dashed forward. The others drew back. In contrast to the roaring noise outside, there was an icy silence in the little room. Then, suddenly, the door crashed open and a mob of guests burst cheering towards them. Pandemonium followed. Then gradually a hush followed pandemonium.

No one was allowed to leave until the police arrived; then they went out one by one between two grim and watchful constables. Moretti was one of the last to go. He almost forgot his dinner jacket, which was still hanging on the hook. But he went back and put it on, then as one of the constables stopped him at the door the other put his hand into the right-side pocket and drew out a neat little revolver, complete with silencer, with one used cartridge in the barrel.

SUCH briefly were the bare facts on which I had to defend Moretti on the capital charge. The case for the prosecution was that Moretti had an old score to pay off against Scada (there was definite evidence of this), and, in any case, the revolver was found in his pocket with his fingerprints on it. He was supposed to have used the flash of the flash-light to conceal his movements.

All this was worked up by the then Attorney-General into a very formidable attack.

The case for the defence was that on the contrary Moretti and Scada had made up their quarrel. That he had never had such a revolver in his possession. That his hands were visible the whole time he was taking the photographs, and that the real murderer had put the revolver in his jacket pocket while he was still in his shirt-sleeves.

A good deal of this depended on Moretti's own story, and, of course, he had to go into

*'Well, if we're all wrong 'uns in this bit of the world,' I said, "may I ask what you have done?"*

*"Murder," he answered, quietly*

the box. It was an anxious time for me. However I had given him a short lecture beforehand on the things that did not impress an English jury. Tears I put in the first place. Then wives and children. After that, lying, being too clever, too talkative, or too self-possessed. In fact as I believed the man to be innocent I advised him not only to tell the truth, but also to look as though he were telling it.

Thanks to this, he made a fairly good impression. He admitted that he had left Chicago on Scada's instructions, but insisted that they had made up the quarrel afterwards. When it came to the actual scene of the murder, he told a plain straightforward story. He said that the whole nine people in the group were watching him and it was impossible for him to have shot Scada without being seen. As for the revolver he knew nothing about it. He put on his jacket in the ordinary way and it wasn't till he was a few paces from the two constables that his hand gripped on something cold and hard in the right-hand pocket. Yes, he knew he ought to have told them about it at once. It was just sheer panic that made him try to hide it.

So far it was pretty well a dead heat. There was nothing to choose between the prosecution and the defence. However fortunately, there were other important exhibits—namely the two photographs which Moretti had taken.

In the first photograph they were all looking towards the camera in a glassy, fish-like, self-conscious way. In fact, it was a perfectly normal wedding group. The second was not. The men certainly were even more fish-like than in the first but Baba was looking, not at the camera but at a point a little to her left, apparently towards the further of the two windows, and her expression would have won a prize anywhere as an example of sheer animal terror.

In spite of this she denied stoutly all through the trial that she had seen anything. She insisted that it was just the effect of the flashlight that made her look like that. That was all very well. But I had studied the photograph, and I was convinced that she knew more than she had admitted. She had seen something, and she was terrified. However, I couldn't shake her in cross-examination. She merely repeated that she couldn't explain the expression on her face. As far as she knew she was looking straight at Moretti, and she was quite certain he couldn't have fired the shot without her seeing. I had to be satisfied with that.

The judge, on the other hand, wasn't satisfied at all. He made it quite plain in his summing-up that he considered that she had committed perjury.

For plain for all to see—and it was handed round the jury box to the accompaniment of nodding heads and pursed mouths—was that photograph of Baba, her heart-shaped face unmistakably turned towards the window. There was no mistaking the famous angle of that jaw, slackened though it was by terror, that short upper lip caught up more still by the same emotion, her eyes widened. Even the fingers of her hand, which had lain in the previous photograph against the satin folds of her dress, were crisped in alarm, so that the material was gathered together.

The judge practically ordered the jury to return a verdict of Not Guilty against Moretti, which they did without leaving the box.

My success in this trial did me a lot of good, and for the next few years I made a very good income. After that, however, I had the misfortune to appear in the Divorce Court, not as counsel, but as co-respondent. In point of fact, it was a perfectly ordinary case of love-gone-wrong and—as other and better men have done—I found out it was not worth it. But the combination of a vindictive husband, a silly wife and a married judge (Lord, how he talked!) made it appear a thoroughly nasty affair and it pretty well dished me. In fact it dished me altogether. I had to leave the Bar.

There were only two redeeming features in this calamitous business. One was that the lady woman who had got me into this mess did not expect me to marry her. And the other was a letter I had from the little Wop, Moretti. He wrote sympathizing with me in my misfortune and remarking that he had quite a good opinion of my abilities, proceeded to offer me a position of trust in his business, at a salary of three hundred a year.

[illegible] proposal. I was still lucky enough to possess private means, so I packed up my things and went off to Africa, alone, to think matters over. Thus, one day about three months later I pitched my moving tent on the Congo side of Lake Mweru. That is to say, my carriers pitched the tent while I looked on.

While this was going on, I suddenly noticed a tall European, in khaki shorts, watching the proceedings with apparent distaste. As the place was absolutely at the back of beyond, one might have thought that he would have been glad of company. But that wasn't his attitude at all.

After a moment he turned to me in a bored way.

"Hullo. Staying here long?"

"A few days, I expect."

"Are you really? My place is just across the way, if you want anything.

Thanks very much

He gave my tent one more look of contempt. Then he drawled:

Better come and dine if you're not doing anythin'. Seven-thirty. Wear anythin' you like—and mind the snakes.

With that he strolled back into the bush, leaving me with my mouth open. A strange visitation! And yet there was something, either about the man or the manner, that seemed familiar. He wore a torpedo beard, after the sensible manner of most men who live in what I believe are called "God's great open spaces." A man with a beard never looks like a tramp—a man who hasn't shaved for a week invariably does. The beard was auburn, his eyes were blue, with not much forehead above them. He was a type rather than a man. That tired voice! That blasé assumption of competence! I felt sure he'd been to Eton.

This impression was further strengthened when I saw him again at seven-thirty. His 'place' turned out to be a tent very like mine, but he ran a good show, and he managed to wear his khaki shorts as though they were a dress suit straight from Savile Row.

"Gin and bitters?" he greeted me. "Sorry I haven't got any ice."

That's all right, thanks. Have you been here long?"

Oh yahs, quite a time.

"Shooting?"

No. Fishin'. I've given up shootin'.

That was a pretty fair example of our conversation all the way through dinner.

However, it was certainly a good dinner, and there was a huge camp fire to sit round afterwards.

WE had sat perhaps for twenty minutes, smoking our pipes in complete silence, when he suddenly asked, in the same bored tone:—

Well, what have you done?"

'I beg your pardon?'

"I mean, I've had five visitors in the last two years, and they were all wrong 'uns. I wondered what you'd done."

I thought it would be amusing to tell him so. I explained.

Oh, I just got into a little trouble in the Divorce Court.

That!" His tone was scathing. "All the same, I'm sorry," he continued. "You struck me as a very able fellow."

What do you mean?

"Well, I happen to know who you are."

I stared at him. I had given my right name to him, but I had not mentioned my late profession, and my name is ordinary enough.

"Well, you seem familiar to me," I said. "I didn't like to ask you, and you didn't proffer the information, but if we're all wrong 'uns in this bit of the world, may I ask what you have done?"

Murder!" he said, quietly.

I was beginning to think he was a little mad. However, he went on:

Remember that little fever Moretti you defended?"

Yes.

"Well, you were quite right. I did."

"You did it?"

Yahs.

Again I stared at him.

"My God! You're not Nigel Heston?"

'Yahs, that's me.'

There was a long pause after that. He apparently did not intend to tell me any more.

Go on, tell me about it. I urged him. "I'm interested. And I won't give you away."

He languidly took his pipe out of his mouth.

Baba knew it was me, of course. I must give her that."

But how did you do it?"

Just walked in and hid behind the curtains when Moretti was out of the room.

"And then?"

Then I fired the shot. Baba saw me.

And then—and then?

Course I never thought I'd get off. Never really meant to try. But when the whole crowd burst into the room I just joined them. And as I didn't know what to do with the bally gun, I popped it into Moretti's pocket.

I say. The Playing Fields of Eton.

"Well, I had to do something with the bally thing. And I'd have confessed if you hadn't got him off. But I didn't honestly see any reason to give myself up after that."

Nor do I. . . And have you been here ever since?"

Oh, yahs. Off and on.

We smoked for five minutes in silence.

"Course, it was bad luck on Scada in a way," he remarked eventually. "You couldn't expect a feller like that to know any better. No tradition!"

Not like your sister?"

That's just it. Something had to be done about Baba. I mean, she couldn't marry a feller like that or go on writin' those articles. Our family has always done pretty well till she came along. After all, we go back pretty far, you know. And she had let us down!"

"Then I wonder you didn't shoot her instead of Scada."

He gave me one withering look.

But I meant to, he drawled. "I missed her. Always was a bad shot. That's why I've given up shootin'.

# IT'S PARIS

## PENRHYN STANLAWS

as told by the AUTHOR

BILL and I were to meet at the Café du Dôme or the Café de Versailles. First it was the Dôme, then the Versailles, and then the Dôme, until the thing got muddled as things are liable to do when two old friends meet by chance after [illegible] in Paris.

At any rate, the next morning found me strolling along the Boulevard Montparnasse without a thing to worry about except where I was to meet Bill. When I reached the Dôme and saw the people sitting at the tables on the pavement enjoying the spring sunshine, I decided that I would wait there, or at least have a drink there and think the whole thing over again.

The waiter brought me my order and I settled down to enjoy the panorama. Midinettes, musicians, murderers, mashers, rug sellers, rascals, reformers—all are in the show. The window mender with the glass in the funny contraption on his back, the ouvre vender with his soft cry of "Zouve—zouve!" furnish a never-ending background for your thoughts or a stimulus if you haven't any. I

*"I look out over the roofs of Paris, and I can see one window, and, in that one window, a girl."*

hadn t any, so I amused myself speculating as to who the passers were and what business they might be about

Two girls whom I took for Americans as they approached spoke as they passed, and I knew that I was mistaken and that they were English

A young man who had passed stopped and stood on the corner He was by no means an uncommon type for the Latin Quarter Perhaps t was because he was so typical that he held my eye. He wore a loose-fitting blue suit and a black soft felt hat. His dark hair was rather long and his flowing bow tie told as plainly as the paint box he carried that he was an artist As I watched he turned round, and I was struck by the delicate beauty of his features and transparent whiteness of his skin, emphasized by deep-set brown eyes and darkly moulded eyebrows.

As I watched him his eyes met mine with a deep, troubled expression, then looked away He started walking slowly back the way he had come, and as he approached my table looked again at me with unhappy eyes. Then hesitancy left him and he came directly to where I sat. Reaching my table he removed his hat and exposed a finely modelled, sensitive brow He bowed and said in a strongly accented English, " Is it possible, perhaps, monsieur, that you buy a binoculaire ? " He reached in his pocket and placed a pair of yellow pigskin field glasses in front of me. " Secon and, ' he added

I glanced at the glasses and then at his troubled eyes. But these are new ? I hazarded.

" Three day old, he said, and as he spoke he swayed and would have fallen had he not caught the edge of my table for support as it was he almost pulled the table over and did spill some of my Scotch.

" Your pardon, monsieur ! " he said, ' but for two day I have not eat

" Sit down my boy said I, and pulled out a chair for him

' *Merci*, he said and sat, and I noticed that he kept opening and closing his hands as though he were in pain

Let me order something. Some soup ? I suggested

I thank monsieur,' he said, ' but I am not beggar

I felt embarrassed. But, damn it al , " I expostulated when a man s starving

If we make business. he broke in,

indicating the binoculars, perhaps fifty or sixty francs. I assure monsieur I pay much more three days ago."

'Yes, I can quite well believe it,' said I. 'But how is it that you buy a fine pair of field glasses a few days ago and now you are starving?'

Monsieur, I am artist painter. I am sensitive. I am emotional. And it happen like this——. But, monsieur, perhaps I detain you?' He started to rise.

'Not at all,' said I, "on the contrary, I have nothing to do and am very much interested.'

'Very well, then," he said. 'Monsieur I come from Marseilles. There I paint, and this winter past I gain the silver medal. Then my friend Henri, who paint here in Paris, he write and say, time you come to Paris. Three weeks ago I come. I go to live with Henri in his atelier.

I am arrived two days and his mother die. Henri need money to go to his village. He have not any. I give him what I have, but I keep five francs for myself. Henri take me to the Rendezvous aux Cochers, the little restaurant where we eat. Mme Carpentier she is *patronne*. 'Madame,' he say, 'this is *mon ami* Pierre. He gain the silver medal at Marseilles. Some day he will make the noise at the salon. My mother she is dead yesterday. Pierre have give me his money and to-day I go. There are the affairs and for one or two week maybe I return not. It is necessary that Pierre eat. Therefore I pray you, madame, to give to Pierre to eat until I return.'

'But you owe me two hundred and twenty francs now,' say madame.

'That I will pay from the testament,' Henri reply.

Madame say, 'Oh, well—understood. But for two weeks alone—after that he eats no more.'

'Understood,' say Henri, and he go by train.

'Monsieur, I am happy in the atelier of Henri. I work and I sing, and when I finish work I look out over the roofs, for we are high up—five storeys high up. But not very far away and not very near is another building, five storeys high up. Of that building I can see one window, and when I rest and look out in that window I see a woman—a girl. She wash her hands.

Monsieur, I am artist. I am sensitive. She is too long for me to see clearly, but she is near enough to see she have red hair and she is not old. Monsieur, I am alone in Paris. I have no friend. Henri he is gone. I look over the roofs at night and I dream. And she come and make the light and pull down the blind and I see her make ready and go to the bed. She is my friend—the only friend I have in all of Paris.

Soon I know when she rise, when she go out, when she return, when she go to the bed. I call her Mimi on account of La Bohème. To me she is Mimi.

'One morning while I watch and she make her toilet, she see me and she wave a lovely white arm from the window. I wave back. Then always we wave. Every night I look over the roofs of Paris and I think of her. Every morning I get up early to be there at my window to see her wave *bonjour*.

'Monsieur, my eyes are good, but I can not see her clearly—a thing I desire much. Monsieur, I am emotional. I have already made a beautiful story between us—a dream story. I am mad to see her eyes, her nose, her lips. I cannot. I go to Mme Carpentier and ask for binoculaire. She have them not. I ask the concierge—he have them not. I am finished.

'Each day to the window I go, but I cannot see her lips. I cannot see her eyes. Only, when she wave, my heart it goes. Monsieur, you think this stupid? You think I am fool? Monsieur, I am artist, and artist are fool. Some night I watch her window after I see her go to the bed until it is morning. Maybe, I think, she know I watched.

'I go to the Rendezvous aux Cochers. Mme Carpentier she say, 'Monsieur Henri is not return. It is two weeks. You eat not here again.'

The next night at the hour of dinner, but I have hunger. I go to see Mme Carpentier. She is iron—she is marble. But she tell me of a rich American who come there to buy pictures by artists of the future. She give him my street number and say he will make visit to-morrow.

On to-morrow he come to see me—M. Cook of Chicago. You know him? No? He is big man, and his wife she is fat also. One picture he and madame like, but it need varnish. He say, 'Make proper and I give you two hundred and fifty francs.'

But, I say, the price of this picture is five hundred francs.

My price, he say, is two hundred and fifty francs. Shall I come to-morrow?

'I say, 'Yes, monsieur.' And then I notice that madame have in her lap a binocular glass.

When I first see it, it is impossible for me to speak. I look out of window. Mimi she is there. I ask for use of glass. Madame she give it me. I say I want to regard Paris from the window. I take binoculaire and my hand tremble. I go and I look out. I pretend to see Paris. Then I look at the window of Mimi.

Never monsieur shall I forget the moment Mimi she makes her debut Monsieur she is wonderful Her hair is beaten bronze Her nose is perfect—absolutely perfect Her lips are—what I dream in my life She look up and see me and wave When she wave her negligé slip back and M Cook pull the glass from my hand

Sorry, but we must be going, he say

They go, and I look over the roofs at Mimi, but again she is far away That afternoon, while I watch Mimi come to the window and make signal to me I make signal back Then she hold up letter she have wrote—printed big on a carton I strain my eyes, but it I cannot read She point to the sign and hold it against the window glass Still I cannot read Monsieur I am frantic She speaks to me and I cannot hear! She try to affix sign in window, but it will not remain Then she wave and go away

'Monsieur I walk the floor I tear my hair I weep Monsieur I am an artist I am emotional—I suffer I look over the roofs and I wait At nine o clock as her habit she make the light and pull the blind and go to the bed But that night, monsieur, before she go to the bed, she lift the blind she put out the light, and she stand there white in the moonshine, and she kiss her hand to me

To-morrow in the morning M Cook he come I am faint because I have hunger Mme Cook she does not come, nor does the binoculaire come M Cook is satisfy He take the picture and give me two hundred and fifty francs and he go I am happy because now I eat But I am faint I go to the window to get the air current, and there is Mimi

'She wave and point—she is arranging the signal in the window I strain to read her signal I lean so far I almost fall out I am mad monsieur I am mad with happiness—I am mad with hunger—I am mad with the great passion The hunger that is physical—it is not for the artist

Again I try to read the signal I give up I rush to the street—to the shop with the binoculaire 'How much?' I say 'Two hundred and fifty francs,' he say I give him the money of M Cook and rush to see again my Mimi I go upstairs, four five at once I go to the window The signal it is there

I arrange the binoculaire I see the signal I make it clear I read it It say

THIS ONE ROOM
APARTMENT TO LET
Apply to the Concierge

And I see that the curtain and furniture also are gone

He had been so earnest—so pathetically earnest that it took a minute for the situation to sink in Then I lay back and howled I laughed until the tears ran down my cheeks and my head ached Then I looked at him He was gathering up his binoculars

Monsieur, to you, perhaps, it is funny I do not laugh' he said—and I went into another paroxysm

He started to rise I grabbed his arm "My friend,' said I forgive me These glasses,' I continued, taking the binoculars from his hand, are just as good to-day as they were three days ago, and I trust that you will permit me to purchase them at their original value.' I laid the money on the table

Monsieur what you say is true, and I accept Nevertheless, I think you are very generous" He folded the notes and put them in his pocket

Monsieur, perhaps would like to see—to buy one of my pictures?'

'No, thanks,' said I It is a matter of fact, I am an artist myself

Monsieur has the heart of the artist,' he said and bowed and left me

IT was a toss-up between the grand and Bill Bill, I must tell you, is a fine story-teller and here was meat for him Here was something he could work upon He would elaborate it, he would burnish it until it was a gem—then he would tell it at the Luncheon Club. But before he told it his eyes would half close and his mouth turn up at the corners and twitch—telling us all that Bill was about to spring a new one, and a masterpiece

But I couldn't find Bill When I reached the Café de Versailles he had gone, leaving word with the waiter that he would meet me at the Café des Lilas at five o clock I felt peeved and lonely, so I went to Longchamps, where I discovered that the glasses were useless for picking winners

It was a lovely day, and had brought out a big crowd and I was held up again and again by the motors and taxis on the way back, so it was after five-thirty when I finally reached the Lilas. I was fearful that Bill might have gone but I spotted him at once. He waved for me to come to his table

Pull out a chair' he commanded

I started to do so—then stopped. Bill's expression was changing and the corners of his mouth turning up On the table in front of him lay a pair of yellow pigskin field glasses

# THE LADY OF

A LOT too soft snowball taking an unsuspecting stockbroker full on the ear is likely to be disconcerting and in certain circumstances, disintegrating. Mr Kimber had just left his house and was hastening to catch a train when the projectile struck him. A peal of laughter apprised him that it had been hurled by his daughter Lorna, aided and abetted by her younger brother Syd whose shrill voice was heard in ululation. The exasperated father had no time to pause and rebuke his offspring. He hurried on through the garden gate, and turning too sharply skidded on the slippery pavement, whence he shot upon the road, slid some three yards downhill, and went to ground in a heap of snow.

Harold Kimber was labelled "thriver" by friends and neighbours in Wimbledon. Till quite recently, before he achieved a junior partnership, he had dubbed himself "striver." At the station he had time to brush snow and ice from his somewhat shabby overcoat, but he was distressingly conscious that his collar was wet and wilting. No matter. When he reached the Mansion House he could buy another in The Poultry. Before the train left Wimbledon he discovered to his still further dismay that he had torn his trousers. Could he face Miss Midlane, the typist with a rent in his nether garments? Certainly not.

He travelled to London with Leonard Peagram, another "thriver" who, within the year, had taken unto himself a second wife. Mr Peagram had said to Mr Kimber that a widower with children was expected to do his duty by them. After meeting the second Mrs Peagram, Mr Kimber reflected that our national hero would have acclaimed the old Peacock as a man after his own heart. He had indeed done his duty in taking to his bosom a lady of uncertain age and temper who ruled despotically over five unruly children, half-a-dozen servants, and her husband.

Mr Peagram perceived the rent in Mr Kimber's trousers and the frown upon Mr Kimber's brow.

"Had a romp with the kiddies?" he asked.

Mr Kimber explained. Lorna needed a sound spanking, but, unhappily such wholesome discipline was out of date. Nowadays you couldn't spank a girl of fifteen. And talk, the old-time "pa-jaw," provoked jeers. His children were home for the Christmas holidays, too full of beans and clamorous for beanos. One grievance bred another. His servants defied authority. He had ceased to be master in his own house. What could a poor devil engrossed with business cares and responsibilities, do about it? Simply nothing, absolutely nothing! If you stated a good plain cook, who was invariably a bad plain cook, she offed it and didn't care a hoot about taking a character with her. He was being slowly poisoned by Mrs. Snell, the Lady of the Larder. His parlourmaid, Phyllis, was a saucy jade.

"Sack the lot," suggested Mr Peagram. "Buzz off to Brighton with the kids."

"I can't take a holiday," groaned Mr Kimber. "I can't take anything in the way of a jolly. All I take is bicarbonate of soda. I work like a black. There are times, Len, when I wish I was alongside of Emily. I only hope that she doesn't know what I am going through."

"Harold," said Mr Peagram, impressively, "you must find another Emily. I say that a man can't pay his first wife a better compliment than to marry again, and, in a case like yours, as decently soon as may be."

Mr Kimber considered this.

"But where, I ask you, am I to find another Emily?"

# HORACE

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# THE LARDER

Ah ' replied Mr Peagram, tactfully ' Your Emily was a wonder ! Good wife—good mother—good housekeeper, a prize packet ! If you'll allow me to say so, Harold, she spoiled you. Still there are so they tell me, two million superfluous women in our Merrie England.

Merrie England," snapped Mr Kimber What a wheeze ! When income tax falls to tenpence in the pound England may be merry again—and not till then "

If you commissioned me," continued Mr Peagram, who was a successful jobber on the Stock Exchange, ' to pick a winner for you I'd get an option on a widow, a woman of ripe experience, a help-meet——"

" Fat, fair, and forty ? "

" Well, well, a comfortable party "

" The good old-fashioned sort, said Mr Kimber, thoughtfully, ' who can beguile a man's heart through his stomach, hey ? Gosh ! you've practised what you preach A bit hard boiled aren't you Len ? I ought to marry again But I'm not the materialist you are I have my romantic side. If a man well on the sunny side of fifty did come across a nice, quiet, modest young girl who'd fall into her husband's ways, having no bad habits of her own why, then—— '

" She couldn't deal adequately with a brace of obstreperous kids and cheeky servants. Not on your life ! "

Mr Kimber sighed and inclined his head

He felt happier when he was greeted obsequiously by the manager of the tailoring and haberdashery establishment in The Poultry

" We thought we had lost, sir one of our most valued customers "

Mr Kimber admitted that he had not bought anything since the death of his wife

Can this gaping wound in my trousers be stitched up here and now ? "

" Now out not here Mr Kimber

Mr Kimber was led into a dressing-room and left alone.

A gentleman in a frock coat appeared, examined the torn garment, and shook his head

I suggest, sir ' he said, in a voice smooth as mayonnaise sauce, a pair of our nattiest pepper-and-salt mixtures. We are doing them, for the holiday season, at thirty-four and six. Wonderful value '

" Right ! I want a collar—size fifteen and-a-half.

" I'll send in a collar Permit me

He slipped a tape round Mr Kimber's waist

' You've lost weight sir "

" Damn it You'd be skin and bone, my good man, if you sat down to my meals. Tell the fellow who brings the collars to fetch along ties.

' And handkerchiefs—— ? "

" Nothing gaudy

' We have handkerchiefs to match our ties, sir

Mr Kimber looked at his watch. What a relief to feel that strictest punctuality was an accursed thing of the past. He could take time over his shopping, if he wished to do so The ties and handkerchiefs submitted for inspection were Christmassy He bought six of each He bought a dozen collars with wings.

Finally, on his own initiative, he bought a ready-me-down black coat, waistcoat, and a hat A smart grey overcoat completed the *toilette*. New gloves were placed in his hand. Surveying the reassuring effect, Mr Kimber exclaimed :

' Why not ? "

' Pardon ? "

Did I speak ?

You said sir ' Why not ? ' "

' Dear dear ! When a man talks aloud

ANNESLEY VACHELL

*Illustrated by* TREVER EVANS

*"We have drifted apart," said Mr Kimber nervously. "My fault I – I kept away from you. But now, if we could resume the old cordial relations. Why not?"*

to himself that's a sign of approaching old age, isn't it?'

'Couldn't be in your case, sir.'

"Missions in the East-end," said Mr Kimber irrelevantly. "Send my old rags to one of 'em. I don't wish to see 'em again.

"I quite understand, sir. Have you changed your address since we had the pleasure of seeing you last, sir?'

'I've changed nothing,' said Mr Kimber a trifle savagely as he drew on his gloves. And then, carrying a high head, he marched out of the establishment.

The frock-coated gentleman assumed that Mr Kimber's 'why not' was connected with Missions. But really a rejuvenated customer was thinking of a widow in Wimbledon, and thinking of her for the first time as a possible successor to Emily. Why not?

He walked jauntily along, but he didn't forget that the pavement was slippery. He was conscious, too, that foot passengers of the opposite sex glanced at him.

The tall-boy grinned when he saw the junior partner. Miss Mayfare blinked. Not

till the senior partner came in were questions asked. The senior partner liked his joke and he had affection for Mr Kimber

"Voronoff or Steinach?" he asked, regardless of Miss Midlane

'I fell on my head this morning,' explained Mr Kimber 'Tobogganed down our hill! Winter sports! Why didn't you tell me that I was a disgrace to the firm?"

The senior partner laughed.

'I was getting a bit uneasy about you.

'Scarecrow what?'

'Running to seed.'

Business engrossed Mr Kimber till luncheon-time. At luncheon he did himself well which was not his habit, inasmuch as he had hitherto believed that time in the City of London spelt money He ordered a pint of well-matured burgundy, and, as he sipped the sunshine of the Côte d'Or he whispered a name:

Eleanore——!"

She was his late wife's best friend, and a

so Mr Kimber assured himself—yes, as that she appeared to be—*and more*

Why not?

The ichor of the Pinot grape percolated through his system He might, he could, by Gosh! he *would* start a modest cellar, lay down a little sound wine

When he returned to the office, Miss Midlane eyed him with solicitude What had happened to her staid employer? She decided that he was ingratiatingly above par

That night Syd came into his sister's bedroom and seated himself upon her bed He was fifteen months younger than Lorna, and had good reason to rank her intelligence higher than his own After dinner Mr Kimber had gone out, despite the bitter weather, and brother and sister were left alone.

'Is the parent going potty?' asked Syd 'Was there a stone in that snowball

Lorna hopped out of bed and produced a secret board of chocolates. Syd upbraided her

'Miser! Skinflint! Glutton

'Help yourself,' said Lorna, calmly But fair do's. We must talk this out When Dad came home all dressed up, I jolly well knew that he had *somewhere* to go. He went there like—like a homing pigeon, after a four dinner"

'Where did he go?

'Ah Echo answers where?' Why didn't he tell us? He had a furtive look"

'Rot Good old Dad Furtive?

'Yes. He had the same look that Phyl's puts on when she tells me *me* that she's been to the pictures with her brother I—I have a hunch that Dad is going to marry again as the Peacock did'

Syd gasped

"That would be a low-down trick to play on *us*. What can we do about it?

I believe that Mrs Snell has dithered Dad Mother wouldn't have stood the beast for five minutes Mrs Snell has given Dad chronic tummy-ache Now, pull up your socks. You and I are up against it Before we know where we are, we may have here another peahen'

This disrespectfully did Lorna speak of Mrs Peagram

MEANWHILE Mr Kimber was spending an agreeable evening with Mrs Whitehorn who lived in a semi-detached villa upon the crest of the steep hill down which he had tobogganed so painfully that morning After his return home when Lorna and Syd were out of the way he had telephoned to Mrs. Whitehorn suggesting the post-prandial visit She had expressed herself as pleased to see him, and hoped that he would drink a cup of coffee, special coffee grown by her son a planter in Kenya

She made the coffee which was delicious Presently Mr Kimber lit a good cigar, feeling perfectly at ease in such congenial company, but slightly conscience-stricken because as Mrs. Whitehorn told him he had of late played the hermit, neglecting old friends who had missed him

Listening to Mrs. Whitehorn's agreeable voice Mr Kimber was reminded of his Emily Eleanore might well have been catty smarting under the sense of neglect But, on the contrary she had welcomed him charmingly, picking up the strands of old interests. So sympathetic was she that he felt tempted to present what might have been an overdraft on sympathy Valiantly he left out of the talk Mrs. Snell and that minx Phyllis, nor did he mention the regrettable incident of the morning Dare we blame him for perhaps over-emphasizing his increasing prosperity? Dare we add, also, that his manner became what Lorna might have called "doggy" when he spoke to Eleanore of his plans for the future

I've made up my mind, such as it is, to think more of myself

'Why not?" said Eleanore

The question coming from her seemed to be pat to the moment

"Do you know that I have said to myself 'Why not?' about fifty times to-day My partner accused me of running to seed That, if you know what I mean led to an auditing of accounts. What is the most tragic thing in life? Regret We must too late too much that is pleasant. We don't I say we do not—gather our roses whilst we may Now why shouldn't you and I and the children go to the pantomime next Saturday? Lunch first, where the food is good

I should love it

Mr Kimber methodical man booked the engagement

'No pantomime for me next year though Harold"

'Why not

'I shall be in Kenya. My boy has built a bungalow but he can't afford to marry yet awhile So he has asked me to keep house for him'

'What a helpmeet you were to my old friend John

'You know I'm looking forward to adventures"

'Adventures?"

I married when I was too young as dear Emily did'

'What d'ye mean by too young?

'Well Harold, I can talk plainly to you, can't I?

'You can, Eleanore. You can't talk too plainly to me. I like it.'

Neither Emily nor I had our blooming time. We became matrons almost as soon as we were out. How often we have talked that over. Now, of course, the pendulum has swung the other way—some girls lose their market.'

'Mm. What sort of place is Kenya?'

Eleanore spoke of Kenya for several minutes. Mr Kimber listened attentively. He gathered that Kenya was a colony in the making, too many blacks, very few white women, lions galore, and plenty of gentlemen adventurers.

He said audaciously (for him)—

'Looks to me, Eleanore, as if you might be keeping house for some other fellow.'

'Don't be absurd!'

'Whatever I am, I'm not absurd. *I* married too young. *I* never had a blooming time. *I* never sowed wild oats. At five-and-twenty I was just about the same steady, stupid, stick-to-business, damned old fool that I am now.'

'Harold——'

'I'm talking to you straight. What do my kiddies think of me?'

'They love you, you dear man.'

'They look on me, you dear woman, as the Universal Provider. And they think that I like doing the providing.'

'Well, don't you?'

'Up to a point—yes. But one expects more gratitude and less back-chat. I miss terribly the—a—*consideration* that my dear Emily never failed to give me. That bucked me up, if you know what I mean——'

'Of course. I know what you mean, but Emily was no ordinary woman.'

'You can appreciate her,' said Mr Kimber warmly, 'because you are cut to her pattern.'

Eleanore's laugh tinkled. She was sorry for her old friend, anxious to help him, and she had eaten, or pretended to eat, Mrs Snell's food.

'If I can do anything, Harold——'

'You can,' he assured her. 'You can.'

Then he paused, blushing. He had made up his mind to marry Eleanore, and he believed that she would consent to marry him if—if he courted her leisurely and with cumulative intensity, so to speak.

'How?' she asked, calmly.

'We have drifted apart,' said Mr Kimber nervously. 'My fault. I—I kept away from you, because you brought back Emily so—so poignantly. But now, if we could resume the old cordial relations——Why not? Drop in to tea to-morrow. You might have a word with Lorna. You might later on deal faithfully with that damnable woman——'

'What woman?'

'My cook, Mrs Snell. She's inflicting upon me the Chinese punishment—Lingering——'

'Ling?'

'Death from a thousand cuts, the worst cuts of butcher's meat, for which I pay top price.'

'Give her a month's notice. I'll find you a cook.'

'Give her a month's notice, and she'll do me in before the month's up,' said Mr Kimber piteously.

Eleanore's heart melted. She promised to do what she could.

AT breakfast, next morning, Lorna and Syd learned where the parent had spent his evening. Under the table Lorna pressed Syd's foot. The little baggage dissembled with her father, and clapped her hands childishly when he mentioned the pantomime. Also she expressed a belated regret about the snowball.

'I aimed at your head, Daddy, cos I never hit what I aim at. Do I, Syd?'

'For a girl, I call you a pretty useful shot.'

Mr Kimber accepted the apology handsomely.

'All is well,' he said, genially. 'All is very well. That snowball, Lorna, has had repercussions. It sent me to my tailor's. I shall go again. This morning I overhauled my wardrobe. I found moth in my swallow-tail coat. I must order another, not a ready-made-down.'

'You never wear anything but a dinner jacket.'

Mr Kimber made no reply.

As soon as he left the house, Lorna and Syd went into committee.

'Mrs Whitehorn,' said Lorna, 'is not a bad old cup o' tea, but moody. Now, buck up. Are we going to grin and bear this? Or is it to be 'Up Guards, and at 'em'?'

Syd began by grinning.

'Why does Dad want to marry again?' he asked.

'That, my child, is a corker to answer. The Peacock set him a bad example. The Peacock, a very wily old bird, married for money. Everybody in Wimbledon knows that. No excuse for him, cos he had lots and lots of the filthy. He talked the very worst tripe about his motherless barnies. Anyway, he's got what he jolly well deserved. Cut him out. Dad, I do believe, is thinking of us. Comes to this. Syd, if we have to take on a 'step' we might do worse than the Whitehorn. Ah, this trouble began in the kitchen.'

'What drivel!'

'I tell you I know.'

'It does beat me why he hasn't booted Mrs. Snell.'

"Dad has been unlucky with his cooks. And he's gone from bad to worse. He loathes rows and scenes. He can't—bother what is the word I want?—got it in one—he can't *cope* with females. He can't cope with me. He's a man's man. Give him his work, give him his golf, give him a quiet life at home, and he can sing in his bath. That's Dad."

Syd scratched his head and was instantly rebuked.

"We might save this putrid situation," said Lorna, after a pause, "if we, you and I, made this place too hot for Mrs. Snell."

"Lorna——!"

"We mustn't rush things. I shall study her habits——"

"She's a boozer."

"How do you know?"

She drinks stout before going to bed. I'd love to down the old devil, because she gives us such muck at lunch when Dad is away. But don't you forget it, she does herself top-hole."

"I'm almost sure," said Lorna, "that she rakes in 'coms' from the tradesmen. That's against the law, if we could prove it."

"She and Phyllis are both on the make."

*"You ought to break such awful news more gently," said Lorna, perching herself upon the kitchen table.*

You seem to have done a bit of nosey-parkering.'

"No. Phyllis had a row with Violet. Violet gave her away to me."

"Violet is the best of the bunch, Syd."

"Violet won't stick it much longer."

Lorna nodded, and proceeded to curl herself up in an armchair. There was nothing to do. No skating, no hockey, not even a brisk walk through melting snow. In fine, the psychological moment.

"Come on down into the kitchen," she said presently. "We'll begin by stirring up her vile temper. Inspiration may rise from below."

Mrs. Sneal received her visitors ungraciously, refusing to allow them to make toffee. Lorna perched herself upon the kitchen table. Syd took a chair.

"What are you going to give us for lunch?" asked Syd.

"Irish stew, with semolina pudding to follow, if you must know."

"You ought to break such awful news more gently," cooed Lorna. "Where did you learn to cook, Mrs. Sneal?"

"Never you mind, miss. My first place as a scullery maid was with a nobleman's family."

"Did you keep it?" asked Syd.

Now, Master Syd none of yer impidence.'

'I've always heard, said Lorna, that good cooks hate to teach their scullery-maids or kitchen-maids.

Why should they? snapped Mrs Snell

'Then we ought to make excuses for you. said Syd

Mrs Snell snorted

That'll do. What a sauce You get out of my kitchen young sir.'

Your kitchen? I thought it was father's

Hop off, Syd. said Lorna. 'I want to have a little talk with Mrs. Snell

Syd vanished closing the kitchen door, as Mrs Snell stared defiantly at Lorna

A talk with me. miss?'

"Yes. I'm old enough to take an intelligent interest in household management I'm not here out of idle curiosity I should like, if I may, to have a look at the books—'

What next, I ask?

'One thing at a time You came to us nearly a year ago Since then my father has steadily lost weight. I ask myself why? Your food disagrees with him Something is wrong somewhere

Mrs. Snell quivered with rage, but Lorna's polite manner and soft voice were impressive To gain time, she said acidly

'Did your Pa 'ark you to talk with me?'

At breakfast, this morning, he said that I ought to have cooking lessons.

Not from me miss."

No, no that idea never entered my head But I thought that you being you, always anxious to oblige, might let me see the books

No. Miss not unless it's master's orders I'm extra busy this morning——

Are you? Why?

Tradesmen'll be round in two two's.

I should like to watch you dealing with them. Why don't we have better fish? Why is the beef so tough? Why don't we change our butcher?"

Are you finding fault with me Miss Kimber?"

I'm only asking for information Mrs Snell

I'll say this Miss If you was my mistress which you're not, I'd give you notice here and now And that's that

Lorna, smiling sweetly, slipped from the table

If you were my cook. Mrs. Snell which you are not, I should accept your notice"

Lorna left the kitchen Mrs Snell, chattering with impotent rage, sank into a chair

PRESENTLY Syd appeared ungovernably hilarious in what had been the children's schoolroom before they went to school. Lorna eyed him apprehensively

What have you been up to Syd'

I've done my bit I oiled into the larder and found a dressed crab Dad doesn't eat crab. I undressed that crab I found half-a-dozen bottles of stout Poured 'em down the sink Good work and I carried on I oiled into the servants' hall There in a cupboard, were two priceless finds. A bottle of whisky, nearly full and what d'ye think?

Likely as not a game pie from Fortnum's

*Her teeth* Wondered why she looked so mumble-choppy They were in a tumbler of water next the whisky What ho' I sent the whisky after the stout and popped the teeth into a pot of jam"

Syd' said Lorna solemnly I haven't the heart to scold you. This puts the lid on She'll off it as soon as Dad gets home

I hope so. That was the big idea She'll be packing her box at five p.m and Dad will take us out to dine at a restaurant

Syd. you stay here. You've done enough Now I must do my bit You've given me my big idea I may be away for half an hour Sit tight. This is the best and biggest rag of our young lives'

Within twenty minutes Lorna returned. slightly flushed but almost as hilarious as Syd had been

'Any stop-press news?" asked Syd

'Yes I bagged one of Dad's labels and went upstairs Violet was in my room Phyllis is in the pantry Mrs. Snell is in the kitchen with Barabbas——'

Barabbas?'

The butcher's man I sneaked up to Mrs. Snell's bedroom I've packed her box leaving out her going-away frock et cetera On the box is the label 'Mrs. Snell passenger to Timbuctoo Have I done my bit?'

They embraced rapturously

And now" said Lorna you and I will take cover We'll cadge a free lunch somewhere At five to the tick, we'll wander back to Home, Sweet Home

MR KIMBER before he left the office, remembered with consternation that he had not told the Lady of the Larder that he was expecting Mrs. Whitehorn to tea At the Mansion House fruit stall he bought a fine bunch of Muscat grapes and a dozen Doyenne de Comice pears.

He chuckled as he did so

As soon as he reached home he rang the

bell. Phyllis, scarlet in the face, answered it.

"I forgot to tell you, Phyllis, that Mrs. Whitehorn is coming to tea. She may be here in a quarter of an hour and——"

Phyllis interrupted.

"Mrs. Snell wishes to speak to you at once. After she has seen you, I wish to see you."

She flounced out of the room, banging the door. Immediately Mrs. Snell entered.

"Has this house been burgled?" asked Mr. Kimber.

"No. I've been burgled. I've—I've been treated that crool and shameful that I've half a mind to call in the perlice. I—I want a month's wages, and an extry two pounds for damage done. And then I'll take meself off."

"Are you stark, staring mad or am I?" asked Mr. Kimber.

Most intemperately so her master affirmed afterwards—Mrs. Snell told her tale. She spared Mr. Kimber nothing. She ended on a high note.

"Your precious brats done this b'outrage. And after the way I've slaved for you an' them——I!"

Mr. Kimber, with a face like a graven image, unlocked a drawer and wrote out a cheque.

"You've nothink ter say?" gasped Mrs. Snell.

"Nothing. Take this cheque and go. Send Phyllis here."

Phyllis appeared, as Mrs. Snell reeled from the room.

"I give a month's notice," she said bitterly. "This is no place for *me*."

Mr. Kimber wrote out another cheque and handed it to her.

"What's this?"

"A month's wages in lieu of notice. You can leave with Mrs. Snell. Where's Violet?"

"I—I don't know—and I don't care. I believe, and so does Mrs. Snell, that she, the nasty, slippery slink, had a hand in this."

"That sounds too good to be true. Neither you, Phyllis, nor Mrs. Snell, need apply to me for a character."

"I wouldn't demean meself by asking for one from you."

MR. KIMBER found himself alone. "Didn't think the darlings had it in 'em," he murmured. "Initiative —— Pluck—— ! Wonderful kids!"

Violet appeared.

"Violet——"

"Yes, sir?"

"Do you think you can manage tea?"

"Oh, yes, sir. Miss Lorna asked me to tell you, with her compliments, that she and Master Syd would be back by tea-time. I'm getting it ready, sir."

"Thank you, Violet. I hear the front-door bell. Show Mrs. Whitehorn in here."

Eleanore, to Mr. Kimber's surprise, began to laugh as soon as Violet left the room. She went on laughing.

"You must have heard the glad tidings," said Mr. Kimber.

"The children have been lunching with me. Harold, don't be angry with them. I know of a jewel of a cook. But you *must* give her a kitchen-maid. You can afford it. What's the secret of domestic happiness?"

"Tell me."

"To be under-housed and over-staffed. Pay good wages to a good cook with a good temper. What's an extra tenner or two? Insurance, I say, against a doctor's bill. Give the maids a pound each at Christmas. And another pound when they take their holiday. That, my dear Harold, is the charity that begins at home."

Mr. Kimber seemed to be visibly impressed.

"Bless you, Eleanore!" he exclaimed with feeling, "and—and bless the children. I see once more the glorious orb of day."

* * * *

Mrs. Whitehorn is in Kenya. Mr. Kimber has not re-married. He is perfectly happy and is putting on weight.

# CORRECT CALLING

# CONTRACT BRIDGE

In the bidding of any ordinary rubber of Contract be analysed it will be found that the players are saturated with the Auction point of view and that they have not acquired the Contract mind. The game usually played is a glorified form of Auction. Yet there should be no difficulty in switching over from Auction to Contract.

The essential differences between the two games are few and are almost wholly confined to the bidding. If the Auction player will concentrate on the following few differences he will be surprised how soon he will acquire the Contract mind.

(1) Count accurately in Quick Tricks (or High-Card tricks) the values in the hand, and connect up these values with the various bids. Thus, an opening bid requires a minimum of two and a half Quick Tricks, a response and an overcall a minimum of one and a half each etc., etc. The player should concentrate on the Quick-Trick strength of his hand and not merely on its playing trick strength, as in Auction. It does not take more than an hour or so to learn thoroughly the various Quick-Trick values, yet I know many players who continually lose games and incur heavy penalties because they vaguely look round the "pictures" in their hand instead of counting up the High-Card values accurately.

(2) Encourage the partner to continue the bidding by changing the suit during bidding. This is the cardinal difference between Auction and Contract. A response which changes the suit in Auction is considered a denial of the suit first bid. In Contract it is different. A (minimum) raise in the suit is discouraging while a change of suit is encouraging. This seems the most difficult feature for the Auction player to get reconciled to in Contract. I have known quite seasoned Contract players say "Partner, you denied my suit." The partner had actually encouraged further bidding by changing the suit, yet such is the persisting influence of the old Auction ideas that even seasoned Contract players find it difficult to shake off the idea of denial.

(3) In Contract, when the bidding has been jumped up by one step more than necessary it is either a "forcing" signal, to make the partner continue bidding, or is a strongly encouraging signal inviting the partner to keep the bidding open. Here again a change of suit makes all the difference. A jump bid (of one step more than necessary) *with a change of suit* is not only an encouraging response but a "forcing" response. A jump bid without change of suit (such as North, one Diamond, East, pass, South three Diamonds) is strongly invitational but is not actually forcing.

(4) There is another feature of Contract bidding which presents a strong contrast to Auction bidding. I refer to denial bids, for these must of necessity exist in Contract also. There are in Contract two important denial bids—or, rather, warning bids, as in some cases they do not deny strength absolutely but rather give a warning of freakish distribution. The first is the minimum No Trump response, thus North, one Heart, East pass, South one No Trump, means that South is just strong enough to keep the

bidding open, but warns North against a Heart declaration. The second is a re-bid in the same suit, thus: North, one No Trump. East, pass, South, two Hearts. West pass, North two No Trumps. East pass, South three Hearts means that South wants to play the hand in as low a contract as possible in Hearts and considers that his hand is of little or no use for any other declaration. The re-bid in the same suit gives a true picture of South's hand and warns North against any other declaration.

The proficient Auction player who concentrates on modifying his game into conformity with these few altered conditions in Contract will find that he is a long way on towards playing good Contract. He will, of course, require time and patience to connect up High-Card values with bids.

The High-Card values themselves which I said above can be learnt in a very short time can best be shown in three separate categories tabulated as follows:—

CATEGORY A.—QUICK TRICKS

This category contains only the more solid values which can be relied upon in attack or defence. Original bids should be based on Quick Tricks only. Slam bids and doubles of adverse bids depend for their success on the greater assurance of Quick-Trick values rather than on the somewhat less reliable High-Card values.

A, K = 2 Quick Tricks.
A, Q = 1½ Quick Tricks.
A = 1 Quick Trick.
K, Q = 1 Quick Trick.
K, *x* = ½ Quick Trick.
Q, J, *x* = ½ Quick Trick.*

These values can be committed to memory in a few minutes, and if a player chooses to rely upon his card sense and judgment only for a general estimate of the valuation of the remaining honours in his hand he can do so without serious loss in accuracy. All the same, there is a loss which may make the difference between missing and securing a successful game contract on an appreciable proportion of hands. These remaining honours in the bidder's hand can and should be included in a scheme of High-Card values. After the original bid all the subsequent bidding can be based on High-Card values.

CATEGORY B.—HIGH-CARD TRICKS

In addition to the Quick-Trick values specified above, the following values for combinations of honours should be used for all bids after the opening bids. When counting up the High-Card values in a hand Quick Tricks are included at the values given above.

A, Q, J = 2 High-Card Tricks.
K, Q, J = 2 High-Card Tricks.
A, J, 10 = 1½ High-Card Tricks.
K, Q, 10 = 1½ High-Card Tricks.
K, J, *x* = 1 High-Card Trick.
K, *x* plus Q, *x* (in different suits) = 1 High-Card Trick.
Q, *x* plus J, *x* (in different suits) = ½ High-Card Trick.

It is obvious that after the partner has opened the bidding, honours in the responding hand have greater value because of the greater probability of a supporting honour in the other hand, and also because of the ability to finesse, etc., owing to having control of play through possessing a greater number of high cards.

After the opening bid the overcaller can also bid on High-Card valuation because of his playing tricks, and because the partner does not attach the same importance to an overcall as to an original bid when it is a question of supporting the overcaller.

* This should only be used to complete values.

# COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE

*Colonel G. G. J. Walshe, who is writing this series of articles on Contract Bridge for "The Strand Magazine," is probably the greatest British authority on Contract bidding. He had the unique honour of being the only non-American referee in the great Lenz-Culbertson match, and was captain of the first British team to win an international match abroad.*

# Correct Calling in Contract Bridge

### Category C.—Plus Values.

Unguarded Kings and Queens and cards of intermediate value (Knaves, Tens, Nines, and even Eights) are very valuable for their stopping power after a clash of honours. These values are too often overlooked by many players who make bids without discriminating between two hands, such as (1) Spades A, 10, 9, 8. Hearts A, 10, 9, 8. Diamonds A, 10, 9, 8. Clubs Q, and (2) Spades, A, 5, 4, 2. Hearts A, 5, 4, 2. Diamonds A, 5, 4, 2. Clubs 5. Obviously there is a great difference in the strength of these two hands. Players should make certain mental allowances for plus values without actually going into fractional calculations. The point to note in particular is that a hand with a weak distribution (3-3-3-4 or 2-3-4-4) and no plus values requires a good deal more High-Card strength to compensate for its weak features.

In addition to the above method of valuation there is the Point Count method which is an alternative way of counting Honour values (Ace = 4, King = 3, Queen = 2, Knave or two tens = 1). This method serves as a useful supplementary guide for the experienced player, but the player who is more or less new to Contract should avoid complicating matters by using two methods of valuation at the same time. For this reason further reference to this method of valuation is postponed.

In addition to High-Card values, there are ruffing values and long-suit values which will also be discussed at a later date.

### Defensive Play.

The following interesting example of poor defensive play occurred during a hand played in a recent Club rubber.

The cards had been dealt as follows:—

The dealer North opened the bidding with a call of Two Diamonds. East, who was not vulnerable, said Two Spades. South doubled on his one and a-half High-Card tricks and his strength in trumps and the promise of about five Quick Tricks from his partner's opening forcing bid.

All passed the double and South led the King of Clubs on which North played the Nine. South believing the Nine was a call to continue play of the suit, followed with the Eight. North took the trick with the Queen and led out his Ace of Clubs. South discarded a small Diamond. North then led out his Ace and King of Diamonds. East discarded a small Heart on the second round. North then led a third round of Diamonds on which East discarded his remaining Heart. South had to ruff, losing a trick in doing so by shortening his Trumps. In the end East got off with a penalty of two hundred and fifty points instead of being down much more.

North's poor defensive play had actually cost his side two hundred to eight hundred points on this one hand. His proper method of playing his hand is quite simple to reason out. He had nearly all the high cards in the three outside suits. He should lead trumps. He should not force his partner to ruff. The latter had shown some length in trumps by doubling. He had obviously four trumps and East five. The Club suit must not be cleared, but East must be forced to trump once so that he has no longer greater length in trumps. If the reader will play the hand in the various ways he will find that if East is forced before he has cleared the suit of Clubs he should lose not less then seven hundred points. If the suit is cleared for East first then East loses only four hundred and fifty points. If, lastly, the poorest defence of all is made and North forces his partner South to trump, thereby reducing his tricks in trumps, then East loses only two hundred and fifty points. The lesson to be learnt is that the best play usually consists in shortening the declarer's trumps and reducing, by so doing, his control of play. Poor defensive play allowed the declarer here to establish two long winning Clubs. Against better play one long Club could be made good. Against the best defence no trick could be established in Clubs by East and it is possible for him to lose a penalty of one thousand points.

# THE PEASLAKE CRASH

## J. E. GURDON

WHEN he left his office to enter his car at four o'clock Mr Peaslake was worth a safe five and a quarter millions sterling. Before midnight the resources of two Governments had been mobilized to run him to earth.

Depression sat with him as his Rolls-Royce slid silently towards Kent through the tangled streets of South London. Business was certainly bad, but nothing short of a national upheaval could seriously affect his own fortune. On the whole he had no cause to grumble at the condition of the money market. In his heart he knew the true cause of his gloom.

At the end of the month Rita was going to get married. Within three weeks she would have left him.

He sighed. It would not be cheerful living alone in the great rambling mansion with only a female secretary to talk to. He liked Miss Dumere. He admired her quiet tireless efficiency. He was even prepared to admit that she was good to look at. But he definitely could not see himself taking her on his knee and playfully pulling her ear.

That Rita would be happy in her married life he scarcely doubted. Her future husband, one Flight Lieutenant Hugh Page-Terry, was a young man thoroughly to be liked and trusted. The fact that he possessed not a penny apart from his pay mattered not a rap to the millionaire who knew how to read men as well as balance-sheets. In short, as he told himself it was sheer darned selfishness to allow the prospect of a little loneliness to cloud happier thoughts.

Just twenty-one years had elapsed since he took charge of his orphan niece—a ridiculously small baby creature which lay on its back and kicked.

Mr Peaslake began another sigh and resolutely turned it into a grunt.

On the Tonbridge side of Sevenoaks the car left the main road, swept into the park of Oakleigh Manor, and pulled up short within six inches of a youth lying flat on his back by the side of a motor-cycle, most of whose parts appeared to be scattered about the gravel.

Foo! barked Mr Peaslake with the irritation of the startled.

Quite unperturbed, the lad climbed to his feet in sections, like a carpenter's rule unfolding, and thoughtfully brushed back a lock of hair with an oily spanner. There was oil also on his skinny bare arms, his freckled nose, and his gleaming spectacles. Young Cyril Paige-Terry, Hugh's brother, never spared himself when engaged on mechanical repairs.

Hullo, he said, thrusting his face through the open window.

The great man chuckled amiably

He knew that in the scales of Cyril's estimation his five and a quarter millions sterling weighed but as a feather against the golden achievements of Mr Kaye Don and Flight Lieutenant Stainforth The knowledge he found curiously disembarrassing and conducive to friendly intercourse

Hullo, he returned

Sorry," mumbled Cyril Hang on a second while I clear away the mess Timing trouble

A minute later his face appeared in the window again

All clear ' he reported " By the way, Rita and Hugh have buzzed up to Town She asked me to tell you she'd be out to dinner and hoped you wouldn't mind

Mr Peaslake's heart sank If there was one ordeal he dreaded more than another it was dinner at home alone

Hugh flew down in the Vysart monoplane,' continued Cyril idly knocking a fly from his ear with a tyre lever You know—the new long-distance 'bus Wonderful kite She's in the paddock Care to come and have a look-see ?

For a moment Mr Peaslake hesitated He had never liked aeroplanes They frightened him. Then he caught the fire of enthusiasm that glowed behind Cyril's spectacles and knew that refusal would for ever lose him the tolerance of this modern mind

" Delighted, he murmured

The Rolls glided on as he turned to his guide with the bright smile of those about to be bored Long-distance monoplane, eh ? ' he exclaimed, genially " How interesting ! You must tell me all about it—her, I mean "

WALKING across the park to the paddock Cyril Paige-Terry punctiliously complied with his host's request By the time they approached the machine Mr Peaslake's usually lucid mind was a swirling fog of technical terms, of which the general effect was a conviction that this freak was grossly overpowered, extremely dangerous, unable to serve the smallest useful purpose, and without any redeeming feature whatever

' Of course,' ended Cyril virtuously ' she's not a Service machine although the Ministry have got her very much on the hush-hush list Hugh would never use a Service machine for joy-riding. She's been built by the Vysart people to break the long distance record and Hugh's been given three months leave and lent 'em as pilot So he can do pretty much as he likes in the way of test flights. It's a load test he's doing now She's got enough juice and grease on board to stay up for twenty-four hours if he wants to There she is Isn't she a wow ?

Thus faced with an unequivocal question Mr Peaslake had to admit that the huge silver monoplane was indeed a thing of beauty, a concrete symbol of clean eager tremendous power

Hop up on that wing and take a squint at the cockpit," urged Cyril

Obediently the millionaire laid silk hat and gloves upon the grass, and, with some difficulty attained the indicated perch

The interior of the cockpit, dark, mysterious, and a-bristle with taps, switches, controls, dials, gauges and instruments, produced two angular and diametrically opposite effects upon him , it made him feel as though he had swallowed a large cold stone and it sent the blood coursing through his veins with a pleasurable tingling sensation that he had not experienced since boyhood

A leather flying helmet equipped with earphones and flex was lying on the little bucket seat He picked it up, examining it curiously

Hughes, explained Cyril ' Fitted for short-wave reception. You just plug the leads in to those holes there, switch on like this, and tune by twiddling that knob Short-wave direction-finding is a new stunt they're experimenting with. Gives better selectivity and is supposed to be impossible to jam

Mr Peaslake was genuinely interested Alone among scientific and mechanical wonders he respected wireless, and this respect had induced an active practical enthusiasm that most men of his age reserve exclusively for golf

After a moment's irresolution he slipped on the helmet and carried out Cyril's instructions The result was disappointing for only an incredibly rapid chatter of Morse came through

Can they transmit by voice as well as key ?' he asked

Oh yes, but it isn't satisfactory yet at long range

Extraordinary ! ' murmured Mr Peaslake, making a mental catalogue of the machine's profuse equipment " It seems to me that the pilot has at least a hundred different things to do, but mighty little room to do it in "

Certainly looks a bit of a squeeze Cyril allowed judicially, ' but actually there's tons of room Jump in and try You'll be surprised

He was standing on the opposite wing reaching out two helping hands. With a queer thrill of recklessness Mr Peaslake grasped the two hands, pulled, heaved,

*Mr Peaslake heard no more. Somewhere in front of him a fiend awoke with a piercing scream. He began to move—very swiftly—with a terrifying acceleration.*

floundered for a second on the cockpit's edge like a large flat fish being hauled over a gunnel, and tumbled, inelegantly but triumphantly into the bucket seat.

Good," approved Cyril. "Tons of room, isn't there? Now put your feet on the rudder-bar. Kick left, turn left and t'other way round. But don't forget to put on bank at the same time. You do that with the joystick—that's the chap. See how it makes the ailerons flap? Works the elevator too, of course. That sort of cheese-cutter affair on the right is the gadget for setting the tail-plane according to whether you want to land, climb, or just fly level. The other fellow on the opposite side is the oil release. If you give it a yank the auxiliary oil tanks in the wings'll empty themselves. Useful way of decreasing load in case of forced landing. All that mess of little levers set in arcs are the engine controls—throttle, ignition, vacuum, etcetera. Better not touch 'em. Hugh may have got 'em set somehow. Here's the self-starter. You just press it like this——"

Mr. Peaslake heard no more.

Somewhere in front of him, but very close, a fiend awoke with a piercing scream. Blinding and stunning, a typhoon slapped his face. Cyril vanished, unlikely like a daddy-long-legs caught by an electric fan.

Mr. Peaslake began to move—very swiftly, with terrifying acceleration.

He yelled. "Mr. Peaslake! Stop! Whoa!"

Impelled by that profound and primitive instinct which urges men, in all moments of distress, to cling on to something and hold it tight, he grabbed the joystick, tugging on it with all his weight as though fighting a runaway elephant.

From his seat in a patch of thistles on the paddock Cyril Page-Terry watched the monoplane, standing on her tail like a rocket, pass from sight into a cloud at five thousand feet.

Language was never intended to express the emotions of a millionaire in the prime of life forcibly snatched to heaven by five hundred and seventy-five horses. In fact, during those first few dreadful minutes Mr. Peaslake knew no emotion. Every muscle rigid, he sat motionless, eyes screwed tight, lips drawn back, feet pressing tensely on the rudder bar, both hands clenched about the joystick, straining it to his stomach.

It was the natural reaction of a man in his predicament and undoubtedly it saved his life. The pressure on the rudder bar kept the machine from swinging, and the unfaltering engine did the rest.

A sudden chill dampness brought him back from his trance. Nervously he opened his eyes.

There was nothing to be seen except the quivering brood of instruments on the dashboard, a long gleaming engine cowling that sloped steeply upwards, and grey formless chaos filling the remainder of the universe.

Like a leaping salmon the monoplane broke through the ceiling of the cloud into clear air. Mr. Peaslake found himself staring straight at the sun. With a faint cry he jerked up his hands for protection. The released joystick fell forward into its normal flying position. Gently the nose sank to horizontal flight. Left to her own devices the well-trimmed monoplane thundered safely onwards.

EVEN more than to financial acumen the millionaire owed his material success to an indomitable fighting spirit. In circumstances which would have left most men helplessly unnerved and paralyzed with fright this spirit now awoke, filling him first with fiery indignation, then with a frozen resolve to escape alive from a wholly intolerable situation. The resolve, indeed, was direct offspring of the fury, for Mr. Peaslake's soul was parched for a reckoning with Cyril.

Inspired and sustained by this very human desire, he took stock of his surroundings.

Among the instruments the altimeter and air-speed indicator were easy to identify, but from neither was any comfort to be drawn. Vaguely he felt that ten thousand feet was somewhat higher than Mount Everest, and that under the influence of internal bodily pressures he must shortly burst like an overblown bubble. Also a speed of one hundred and twenty miles per hour filled him with nausea aggravated by a ridiculous fear of being caught by a policeman.

His eyes fell on the mess of little levers set in arcs, which Cyril had told him were the engine controls. After much trepidation, and with a heart that thudded in his throat, he firmly seized the lot and pulled.

Silence fell like a thunderclap. The monoplane bucked as a nervous mare before a five-bar gate, stalled, cocked up her tail and fell howling.

Horrified, Mr. Peaslake snatched at the stick and hauled. Clouds streaked with blue sky and distant earth whirled dizzily past his head. He flung out his elbows against the sides of the cockpit as the machine looped, completing the circle with a headlong dive.

Far below in Maidstone a very senior Air Force officer watched that amazing evolution with stark incredulity and a crawling scalp.

As seconds passed and still he lived Mr Peaslake's spirit took charge once more Wisely he left the stick alone, but reversed his operation with the engine controls Bellowing, the monoplane flattened out from the dive at a bare thousand feet and raged off in the direction of the coast Breathing deeply, the watcher on the ground made for the nearest telephone

It was about the same time that Cyril after frenziedly ringing up every haunt that he could think of, got in touch with his brother, who was enjoying a quiet cocktail with Rita in a West-end restaurant

In his Service, among both officers and men, P.-T enjoyed a well-earned reputation for imperturbability but he returned from answering that call with a white face and a dazed air

Rita looked up at him inquiringly from beneath her little red hat her eyes bright and dark her head slightly tilted and birdlike P T repeated Cyril's story in the disjointed confused sentences of a man who cannot believe himself She listened with a growing dismay that found expression in a little scream

*Hughie!* How *terrible!* *Awful* Cyril! exclaimed Rita. "But the precious lamb can't *fly!*" she ended, as though announcing a discovery

He doesn't have to," P.-T pointed out That old tramp'll fly herself as long as she's left alone

After several months with the High Speed Flight he had scant respect for any type of aircraft that required less delicate handling than a racing seaplane

B-b-but" pursued Rita how—how will he get down again?

That" retorted P T in the question I must get through to the Ministry Wait here in the lounge

Left alone Rita thought of her future brother-in-law with increasing distaste *How like* Cyril, she reflected, to send precious darling Uncle Bill chuntering about the sky like a maddened moon. For a moment the image of Uncle Bill and his probable feelings aroused an almost hysterical desire to giggle, then the full horror of his plight came to her and she shuddered. Rita dearly loved her uncle

Casually strolling about the lounge an elegantly-dressed young man had for several minutes been watching her with considerable interest. Journalist by trade sponge of society gossip by disposition, Cecil Culver knew Rita well by sight, as indeed he knew every marriageable heiress in London Her agitation and Hughie's abrupt departure had instantly caught his vigilant eyes and he scented copy

The arrival of a girl who sat down beside Rita with an exclamation of surprise and pleasure provided him with an opportunity to slip behind a tub of palms, where he stood negligently reading a paper, unable to hear all that was said but near enough to glean phrases that made his heart somersault with excitement

Rita greeted her acquaintance with the warmth of sister meeting sister on a desert island. She had in fact reached a degree of compressed emotion when she would willingly have chattered to the lift boy

"*Angel!*" she cried laughing though near to tears. "What *do* you think has happened? Poor darling Uncle Bill has taken to flight

It was a typically Ritaesque expression and it contained no more than the literal truth, but it acted upon Cecil Culver as an electric shock. Quivering he edged a few feet nearer

"Vanished into the blue, my dear continued Rita's voice. "In an aeroplane Hughie's 'phoning the Ministry now. Uncle Bill simply went off *whoosh* and is still leaping about all over the celestial hemisphere! Of course, they'll be after him in no time

At this point Cecil Culver moved reluctantly but hastily away, for P.-T was returning and his face promised short shrift for any eavesdropper

At last" breathed Rita "What ages you've been, Hughie Is there any? It's all right I've told Pam

P.-T frowned. He had spent an excessively unhappy ten minutes on the telephone being alternatively cursed and sworn to discretion

Go on, *go on*, GO ON!" panted Rita beating a tattoo on the parquet with two small feet "Is he—is he still?

P T understood the unfinished question and decided that, Ministry or no Ministry he was not going to leave her in suspense another second.

Still going strong," he answered Last seen over mid-Channel heading for France hell for leather and trailing several hundred yards of wireless aerial that he'd collected with his under-carriage from the masts near Dover There's a certain amount of risk [illegible]

Chafing in his taxi on the way to Fleet Street, Cecil Culver was already composing headlines for the scoop of the century—FLIGHT OF CITY MAGNATE—THE PEASLAKE CRASH

They sounded good

IN claiming that the monoplane would almost fly herself P T had spoken no more than the truth as Mr Peaslake found during the half hour that followed his memorable loop, moreover, by diffident

experiment he ever learned that a gentle movement either way of the rudder-bar would cause the machine to turn slowly and safely, that by pulling the stick back he could make her climb, and that pushing it forward depressed the nose. The refinement of banking he did not attempt for it did not occur to him.

It was the confidence born of these discoveries that led to the violation of the wireless masts.

Looking down and ahead Mr. Peaslake saw the shining waters of the Channel. The sight struck him with a panic which immediately changed to a dogged determination that, no matter with what consequences his conscription should not include foreign service.

Forward went the stick until its spade-grip chafed the dashboard. Obediently the long cowling dipped.

Had he then throttled back the engine and folded his arms the machine must

inevitably have made some sort of landing, and with luck Mr Peaslake might have escaped with nothing worse than a bad shaking But the memory of the loop was still crisping his toes, and not for all his five and a quarter millions would he have risked another such experience

The engine continued to give of its tremendous best.

Disturbed by an approaching scream like a heavy shell, officials of the wireless station rushed for the open in time to see a winged projectile, with exhaust spitting flames and smoke, swoop between their aerials and make off trailing its prey

Despite its weight and almost irresistible momentum, the monoplane did not achieve this havoc without a jar that shook every

*Officials of the wireless station rushed for the open in time to see a winged projectile swoop between their aerials and make off trailing its prey*

bone in Mr Peaslake's body. To that jar he owed his life, for it impelled him instinctively to snatch back the stick when within a second of eradication. Painfully screwing round his neck he peeped behind, saw the wake of snaking cables, and knew what he had done.

That knowledge drove him to fifteen thousand feet over the centre of Belgium.

Like many a man of immense wealth Mr Peaslake had an almost morbid horror of damaging valuable property, and for more than two hours his sense of guilt aggravated by an equally vivid fear of the ghastly publicity that must ensue, hounded him on like a murderer pursued by the shadow of the rope. Occasionally he shifted the setting of the rudder-bar, thus tracing an erratic course that covered most of Flanders, touched on France, and skirted the frontiers of Holland.

To him it seemed that he must be unknown, unwatched, and therefore immune from interference until on his own initiative he could devise a course of action. It was a false assumption.

Between England and the Continent the wires were ceaselessly a-buzz with reports, instructions, suggestions, and preparations. Hundreds of binoculars followed his wanderings; scores of ambulances waited for the call, in dozens of hospitals surgeons stood by, while the flying experts of four countries grappled with the problem of Mr Peaslake's deliverance.

IT was Cyril who ultimately supplied the key to the puzzle. His memory stimulated by Hugh's searching examinations, he suddenly recalled Mr Peaslake's interest in the wireless apparatus, and even that the millionaire had shown some practical intelligence and knowledge.

An hour later Hugh took off in a fast machine equipped with a short-wave transmitting set. Along each side of the fuselage were the words *'Switch on Heatless'* crudely but boldly painted in black letters on a white background.

At eight o'clock he came upon the monoplane describing wide flat circles over Bruges, and Mr Peaslake, eagerly obeying the written order, heard a familiar cool voice hailing him across space.

The messages and instructions that followed were necessarily complicated and not easy to assimilate, but the bewildered pupil was at last able to understand that P T would lead him to a suitable haven, and that he must then carry out a certain sequence of movements—throttle down his engine when a rocket was fired, allow his machine to glide in a straight line at sixty miles an hour, and, as he saw the ground approaching, ease back the stick very, very delicately. The monoplane promised P T would then alight of her own accord. Moreover Mr Peaslake was to remember most clearly, that if anything went wrong at the last moment he must immediately open out the engine again and climb for another attempt.

Because the light would soon be failing P T selected a landing ground near Brussels as the scene of Mr Peaslake's ordeal, wireassed to the authorities that all arrangements might be made against their descent, and once more turned over in his mind the instructions he had given, fearful lest some vital point had been overlooked.

When already within sight of their goal he remembered the tail-plane trimming lever.

To ensure anything like a proper landing it was essential that the lever should be pulled right back. He himself had left it in the correct position after landing at Oakleigh Manor, but, he felt, there was no knowing what experiments Mr Peaslake might have conducted in the meantime. If, for example, he had pushed the lever fully forward to discover its action, he might not have noticed much difference in the flying of the machine, although when landing [illegible] set [illegible] a series [illegible] somersaults.

Again the wireless became busy as P T sought to clear this matter up. After half an hour Mr Peaslake, more frightened and confused than ever, had gathered that his life depended upon a lever set close to the floor between his seat and the side of the cockpit.

A rocket leaped from his guide's machine, drew a green curve against the sky, and fell twinkling to be quenched in the abyss. He glared ahead, spotted the hangars on the landing-ground, set his teeth, throttled back the engine, and fixed his eyes unwinkingly on the air-speed indicator.

Like a solicitous mother thrush hovering round a fledgling, P T followed his descent in gentle turns and spirals a few hundred yards away. On the aerodrome the ambulance was started up, a little group of privileged and distinguished officials watched the approaching drama with bated breath, every machine was hastily manœuvred into its shed, while the police aroused intense excitement and interest by rounding up all spectators into one flock on the lee of the refreshment rooms.

In straight flight and with calm deliberation Mr Peaslake sailed down to within fifty feet over the assembled officials, wrenched at the fateful lever by the side of his seat—mistook left for right, released twenty-seven gallons of oil upon their

expectant faces, completely lost his head as the ground rushed up, and, with triumphantly roaring engine, thundered away again into the gathering dusk.

THE news reached Fleet Street ten minutes later and within half an hour the Ministry understood what had happened.

To Fleet Street at first it all seemed too good to be true, but as report after report came through from enthusiastic representatives in Belgium, and as these reports not only tallied but confirmed the suspicions already aroused by Cecil Culver, scepticism yielded to jubilation. No murder could have made the night so bright.

Although details were necessarily scarce and motives wholly lacking, the essential facts proved on investigation to be indisputable.

Mr Peaslake, the well-known City magnate, had quite definitely taken to flight that afternoon in a very special type of aeroplane, and had escaped to the Continent after a daring attempt to silence the wireless station at Dover. The Air Ministry, while of course officially denying all knowledge of the incident, had sent a fast fighter

*Anne sat on his bed, and for the hundredth time she told him what an agony of anxiety she had suffered.*

in pursuit the fighter succeeded in forcing the fugitive millionaire to within a few feet of the ground near Brussels, but at the last moment with almost superhuman resourcefulness, Mr Peaslake discharged a barrage of oil, and thus protected, departed for some unknown destination

Possibly the more extravagant conclusions of the Press would never have been drawn had Cyril Paige-Terry been allowed to tell his tale to the reporters who flocked to Oakleigh Manor This, however was just what the authorities prohibited with a view to keeping a secret that was already agitating both sides of the Channel

Being thus left to speculate unchecked, *The Daily Post*, *The Daily Mercury*, and the others very naturally and properly presented the news in the manner most likely to enliven several million breakfast tables

Summing up in its headlines on the centre page *The Daily Post* called for attention :—

AMAZING DRAMA OF THE SKY
MISSING MILLIONAIRE
IN HUSH HUSH BATTLE PLANE
DEATH DEFYING DIVE ON DOVER
PURSUERS BLINDED BY
OIL BARRAGE

Scarcely more diffident *The Daily Mercury* buttonholed its readers with :—

MONEY KING'S AMAZING
ABDICATION
FLEES ALONE IN MAMMOTH FLYING
BOAT
Wireless Station Attacked and Wrecked
R.A.F CALLED OUT
ESCAPE IN OIL SCREEN

Throughout the night the presses raced as they spread this feast for the morning the while Mr Peaslake unhappily roamed the sky with P-I in close and constant attendance Twice that distracted officer was compelled to descend for refuelling, but on each occasion a relief machine took his place. Not though it required the vigilance of a dozen squadrons to keep track of him would the Ministry have permitted Mr Peaslake to escape observation for a minute

Authority however need not have been so concerned

Far from becoming more terrified and irresponsible with the passing hours, as was expected, Mr Peaslake although cold weary apprehensive and furious was gaining confidence and mapping out a clear course of action

Long since, the actual controlling of the machine had become automatic Even the thought of landing no longer turned him sick with dread. Idly manipulating stick and rudder he wandered visualizing in his mind every detail of his plan

It was simple yet offered a way out of many embarrassments

Although no navigator Mr Peaslake recollected that the sun always rises in the east, and that England lies to the north of the Channel. By keeping the dawn on his right he would therefore be heading for home Having struck the English coast his intention was to follow it east or west until he found Dover, which, he argued should be easy to recognize by its harbour and castle From Dover the main railway line would guide him towards London, passing close to Tonbridge and Sevenoaks. Once in that neighbourhood he could circle round until he spotted Oakleigh Manor and there on his own land he would find rest, dead or alive

After that it would be Miss Dumere's business either to defend him against all comers or to make arrangements for the funeral

The more he pondered his plan the better he liked it, and the greater was the trust that he felt he could repose in Anne Dumere.

Again and again his thoughts returned to her recalling countless instances not only of efficiency, but of tact and sympathy Her voice he remembered, was always soft, her hands invariably cool, her face serene within its smooth frame of black hair Strangely comforting it was to know that she would still be with him after Rita's marriage, even though he could never dream of her sitting on his knee while he playfully pulled her ear

DAWN came to reveal the carpet of fog that was to keep Mr Peaslake aloft for many more exasperated hours.

Still attended by the faithful P T whose signals orders, and entreaties he stubbornly ignored and to whom he could not reply because Cyril had not instructed him in the transmitting side of the wireless before he went rocketting off into the air, the millionaire turned around the Channel where the water, faintly shimmering through the mists, at least afforded some indication of position and as he thus blindly ranged and waited, far away the City of London awoke to a frenzy of telephones and clicking tape machines, to whisperings, lamentations, and execrations, to the chattering dismay of brokers and the dignified flutterings of Banks, while a nervous Market shuddered and quailed and the price of every stock with which Mr Peaslake was connected went toppling and tumbling, and around the

world's marts flashed the wild tidings of The Peaslake Crash.'

To the captive in the air, noon brought good fortune and release, for through the thinning shreds of fog he glimpsed the cliffs of Dover.

No exile ever rushed more eagerly home to his native soil, no lover ever followed his lady more ardently than Mr Peaslake followed the lines below; no conqueror ever shouted more exultantly than he shouted when a familiar rambling mansion came in sight; no djinn flung down from Paradise ever came to earth with more clamour and disruption than the monoplane ploughing her way to a standstill through the extensive conservatories of Oakleigh Manor.

ANNE DUMERE sat on his bed when the doctor left.

Mr Peaslake's face was stiff and sore with many stitches, from scalp to toe his body was bruised and aching, yet within he felt queerly warm and happy.

For the hundredth time she told him what an agony of anxiety she had suffered, how inexpressibly thankful she was to see him back safe and more or less sound, and how intense was her admiration of the Napoleonic coup whereby he had brought about an acute yet fleeting depression of the Market.

"But you might at least have confided in me," she reproached him, smilingly. "Of course, I guessed at once why you were doing it, but—oh, Mr Peaslake! I was so worried. You see, I never even knew that you could fly, and young Mr Paige-Terry kept repeating the most *ridiculous* story.'

She threw back her head and laughed. She had a pretty throat.

Anyway, thank heaven it's all over,' she ended, 'and *what* a scoop! Naturally, I pulled every string to buy when the prices dropped this morning. They'll be back to normal by to-morrow and you'll have made nearly a million! Really and truthfully, Mr Peaslake, it was *the* most *marvellous* idea that *ever* was!"

For some time Mr Peaslake had been aware that his secretary's demeanour was unusual—less formal, more human, almost intimate. He liked the change.

'You think it was a marvellous idea?' he chuckled.

She nodded breathlessly, eyes shining.

I know of one much more marvellous.

*Oh!*' cried Anne, for Mr Peaslake had drawn her close.

What *are* you doing?" she whispered. '*Darling!*'

Diffidently his hand stole up and playfully pulled her ear.

# ACROSTICS

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 237.

THERE will lure
The epicure
And maid demure

1. For ill-starred boats a dark and dread abyss.
2. Boundless indeed, if board is given to this.
3. She gives to sinful men their due reward.
4. Is seen upon the hearth or tented sward.
5. Neither superior nor inferior seems.
6. Poetic epithet for Cynthia's beams.
7. House oft. It rises from the watery scene.
8. The sweetest nymph is here, who lives unseen.
9. Thus fasten, and contentment you may glean.

W. J. B.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 235.

Keep your chimneys free from blockings,
For he comes to fill your stockings.

1. Dry in Prunes, and I have reckoned
It is only half a second.
2. Month of opening leaves and flowers.
Sunshine mingled oft with showers.
3. Malady that is most horrid,
Stabbing pains attack the forehead.
4. Ko-Ko, Pooh-Bah, the Mikado,
In this town did promenade. O
5. This thaw clumsiness is better,
Do it to a ball or letter.

BOODLEBAR.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | S | e | C |
| 2 | A | pr | L |
| 3. | N | eura | gi A |
| 4 | T | li | p t |
| 5 | A | ddres | s |

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 230.

When blushes were in fashion.
Ah! many years ago,
This name was often whispered
Beneath the mistletoe.

1. Her waist has circled when perchance
She tripped off to a Christmas dance.
2. Oh! let her dainty head 'twould cover,
Or hide her dimples from her lover.
3. If you would see a fairy maid,
This girl will need a cinder's aid.
4. Although like summer was her name
The house was bleak on which she came.
5. A gate, a stile, a glade, a tree
A joyous meeting-place may be.

VOX

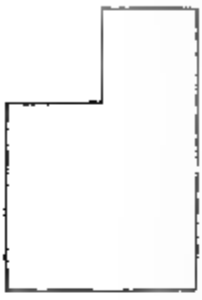
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | S | a s | H |
| 2. | W | m p | E |
| 3. | E | l l | A |
| 4. | B | s t h e | R |
| 5. | T | r y s | T |

NOTES. Light. 3. Cinderella. 4. Bleak House. Esther Summerson.

# PERPLEXITIES

### 1,129.—A CUTTING QUESTION

A cutting-out problem which appeared on this page a few months ago has moved a reader from York to propound another one. He invites you to fold over half a sheet of notepaper so as to form a square at the bottom, and after this to cut away half of the part at the top so that a square one quarter of the size of the larger one will remain attached [illegible].



It is now required, by two straight cuts, to make three pieces which will, when arranged, form a new square

### 1,130.—A FALLING MARKET

Three growers, Hogbin, Pettman, and Larkin, took respectively twenty-seven, twenty-five, and nineteen cauliflowers to market, and agreed to sell at the same price till five o'clock, when, if they had any left, they would all lower their price to the same figure, which was not to be less than twopence. All had some left at five o'clock, both prices were whole numbers of pence, and each grower sold all his cauliflowers and realized seven shillings and a penny. What were the prices, and how many did each man sell at each price?

### [illegible] THE MISSING LETTER

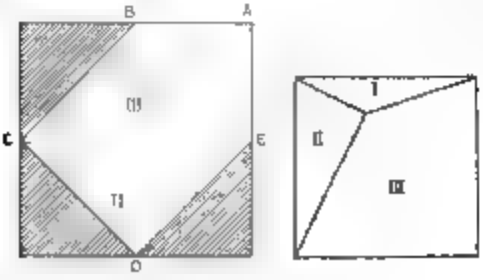
Can you make an English sentence out of this collection of letters merely by inserting the same letter wherever it is asterisked, as in like [illegible]

A*PPLE*AMOUTD TREE IN *OUAF

## Solutions to Christmas Puzzles.

Enigma. The word that filled was SHAFT. The allusions are explained by [illegible] "pair of shafts" (*service meaning*—coster's barrow, etc.), "gold" (target), "with a smile" (shafts of wit from jesters), "Kings I have killed" (Harold, William II).

Mr. Askham-Best's Square.—The shaded portions are the bits removed. The remaining figure is cut along the dotted line, namely from A and C to the middle of the base. Numbering the pieces I, II, III, we see in the right-hand figure how they must be placed together to make a square.




The Number in Form.—Mrs. Askham-Best argued like this: If ⅓ of the old form were promoted instead of ⅓, this would leave ⅔ instead of ⅓, i.e., double the number. And if the new arrivals were also doubled, the hypothetical form resulting from these imagined alterations of fact would be just twice as large as the true one. But it is 19 greater; therefore, the actual number is 19.

The Moving Staircase.—If $x$ = number of steps formed by escalator

$$\frac{x-36}{x-18} = \frac{20}{40} \qquad x = 54$$

Time taken for 54—36, or 18 steps' rise = 20 seconds

" " 54—9, or 45 " = $20 \times \frac{5}{2}$ secs

= 50 seconds.

Winifred's Crossword

*Across*

Four C's (Forces, Four Hundred)

*Down*

C's (Seize, Seas, Sees).

Limerick.—Sarum, harum-scarum, Hants, pants, wear em.

Uncle Mortimer's Division.—1,001 is, in Roman numerals, MI. If this be "divided" by XI, thus MXI, the resulting number is 1012, which is a multiple of 11.

The Mayor's Stakes.—Let a, b, c, d, be the number of *plunkos* staked on the 2, 3, 4, 5 to 1 horses respectively.

Then $2a = b + c + d = 12$

$3b = a + c + d = 9$

$4c = a + b + d = 8$

$5d = a + b + c = 6$

By subtracting one of these equations from the other three in pairs we get

$$a = 5 \qquad b = \frac{6}{4} \qquad c = \frac{6}{8}$$

$$d = 3$$

and $a : b : c : d = 20 : 15 : 12 : 6$.

If the number of *plunkos* staked were 20, 15, 12, 10, a gain of 3 would result in every case. Therefore the stakes must be 4 times as great, or 80 *plunkos* on the favourite, 60 on the 3 to 1 horse, 48 on the 4 to 1 horse, and 40 on the 5 to 1 horse.

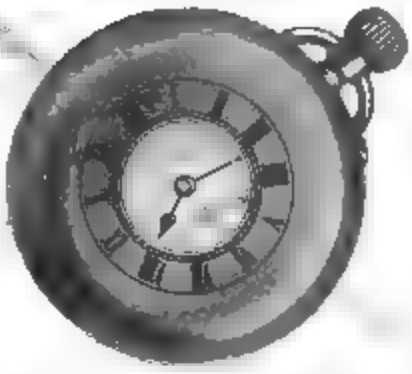
Queer Multiplication.—Calling the left and right numbers at any stage L. R. the essential principle is that L × R must remain the same or undergo such final compensation as will make it the same.

If R is even, the division of R by 2 and the multiplication of L by 2 leaves the product unaltered, and therefore involves no compensation. If R is odd ($= 2n + 1$) the step goes

(a) L R($= 2n + 1$)

(b) 2L n

The product in line (b) is 2nL instead of (as it should be) 2nL + L. Therefore L must be added when R is odd, but not when R is even.



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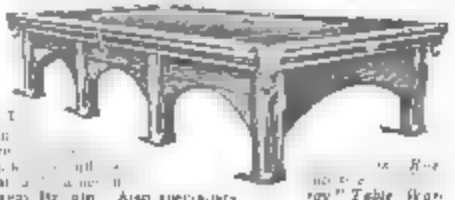

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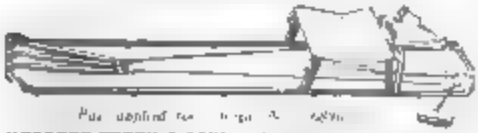

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To face end of Vol.

# YOU AND YOUR HOME

A Monthly Miscellany for the Modern Woman

Conducted by

"MILADY"

*Inquiries should be addressed to "MILADY," c/o THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply.*

**The Household Routine.**

No self-respecting housewife would think of trying to run her home without a set routine. Each day has its appointed tasks, and by the end of the week, if all is well every detail has been attended to. This is excellent in theory, but in actual practice it sometimes happens that the whole thing goes wrong. Possibly—let me whisper it—the original programme was not too well thought out, or it may be that circumstances have made part of it obsolete. If your own system doesn't seem to be working any too smoothly don't make the mistake of sticking to rules just because you have always done things that way. Remember that the routine was made for *you*, not you for the routine! Think it all over, from A to Z, and from Monday morning to Saturday night, and see where it can be improved upon.

**Practical Experience.**

I was prompted to write the foregoing owing to a recent experience with a friend, one of the most conscientious and capable housewives I know. Visiting her the other evening, I found her decidedly tired and worn-looking. "It's Monday, you know my dear," she told me. "I'm always completely knocked up on Mondays, there's such a lot to do after the week-end. The maids loathe it just as much as I do, by the time we've cleared up after the men and seen to the ordinary work we're just about *finished!*" This remark struck me as indicating a weak point in the system, which should aim at spreading the jobs over the week, and "greatly daring"—I suggested as much. My friend didn't get annoyed, but went into details, confessing eventually that the day's programme was obviously too crowded. Between us we planned a routine for those dreaded "Mondays" which should make matters much more pleasant in future. Quite unconsciously this good woman had crammed a lot of work into Monday—probably just because it was Monday—which could quite well wait until the inevitable week-end upheaval had been dealt with. I only mention this, of course, as an example, but you will probably find—especially if you have been working to a set schedule for a number of years—that in some respects it has got out of date and needs revision. Whatever you do, try to avoid having a day so packed with work that you are left more or less of a wreck, and poor hubby coming home tired from the office knows exactly what is in store for him!

**The Outdoor Woman's Coat.**

Women living in the country, or who spend a good deal of time out of doors, need

(*Continued on page 24.*)

*Showers of Bargains in this*

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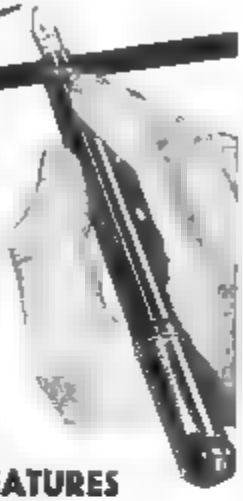

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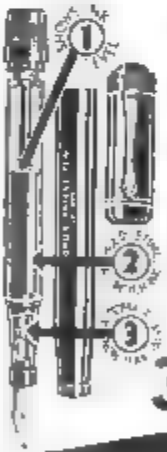


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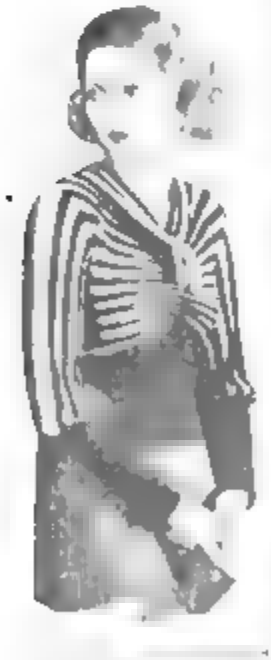
## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

a coat that is reliable under all conditions—not a nondescript "raincoat," but a real *weatherproof* that will always keep one dry and comfortable. A coat of this kind should be capable of keeping out chill winter winds and driving rain, yet it must not be heavy, it should be cut on roomy sporting lines and yet look smart. This sounds rather a tall order, but a well-known West-end firm has successfully solved the problem and produced a weather-proof coat for women—and also men, incidentally—which is utterly and entirely dependable. You *can't* get wet in it, it will keep you nicely warm and yet never overheat you, and it is the essence of smartness in cut. Send me a line if you want to know more about this excellent garment.

### The Vogue of Wool.

I am illustrating below a charming pure wool jumper in a striking adaptation of purl-and-plain stitch. This is made in ten different colour-combinations, all with white "contrasts" at neck and on sleeve, and is the product of a famous Scots house. It costs 37s. 6d., and is only one of the countless fascinating examples of woollen sports-wear this firm has to offer. No wonder, with such lovely styles and colourings available, that wool is enjoying a tremendous vogue. You ought to see this firm's illustrated catalogue of the latest models.



*A charming woollen jumper in purl-and-plain stitch.*

### "Tray-Tables."

Here is a novelty which will appeal to many housewives, unlike some novelties it is eminently practical. It takes the form of a handsome tray suitable for every purpose one needs a tray for. When necessary, however, you merely press a trigger and your former tray becomes, in the twinkling of an eye, a rigid, handy tea-table, most useful not only in the house, but for garden, motoring and picnics. There is nothing to slip or go wrong, and the whole thing is very strongly built. Various models are available, in painted wood or stained finishes, also in oak or mahogany with square legs, and nickel, copper, or chromium plated finishes, at prices ranging from 15s. upwards. There is also a special invalid or bed-table type with gut legs.

*The new "tray-tables" shown open and closed. When used as a tray the legs fold up underneath.*

### Making Your Own Marmalade.

The "snag" about home-made marmalade so far as the housewife is concerned, is the troublesome shredding of the fruit. This difficulty has now been entirely eliminated by the introduction of a most efficient and moderate-priced rotary cutting machine which gives perfect shreds entirely free from crushing or bruising, all you have to do is to turn the handle. When in use the machine can be clamped to a table or dresser, and the blades are made of hollow-ground Sheffield steel, handsomely nickel-plated. The whole thing can be cleaned in a jiffy, and with a little care will last for years. This excellent device costs only 7s. 6d. complete, and should prove a most satisfactory investment.

### Billiards for Winter Evenings.

The young people are insistent in their demand for "something to do," and for lack of home attractions often get into the habit—very distressing to mother—of spending their evenings elsewhere. The remedy lies in providing some pleasant pastime in which everybody can take part, and for this purpose there is nothing to beat a good billiard table. The fascination of billiards never pails, it is, indeed, the king of indoor games. Never mind how small your rooms are—if you go to the right people you can get an inexpensive model, to fit over your existing dining-room table, that will give you a perfect game in small compass. These "lay-over" tables, complete with all accessories, are quite cheap, and if desired you can pay for them by monthly instalments. There are also, of course, more ambitious types if your pocket will run to them. Once you have installed your table you'll have no difficulty in keeping the family at home, everyone will want to play!

*(Continued on page 26.)*

# INDIGESTION

the bane of existence to thousands indicates, generally, an over-acid condition of the stomach. So long as that prevails, the normal digestive processes cannot proceed. It is easily corrected by a century-old preparation more widely used than ever to-day

# DINNEFORD'S PURE FLUID MAGNESIA

Invaluable for acidity, heartburn, headache, indigestion, flatulence, bilious affections and allied complaints. A pleasant, harmless fluid which stimulates natural functions, soothes the digestive tract, and gently restores a healthy condition.

BRITISH MANUFACTURE 1/2 & 2/6 per bottle

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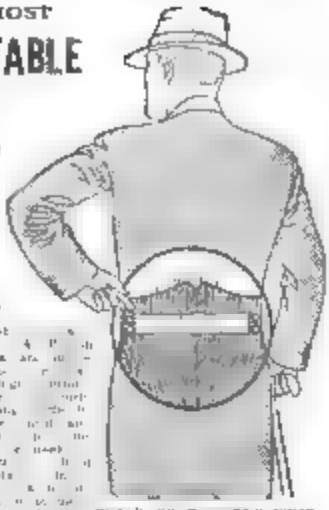
# COMFORTABLE TROUSER SUPPORT in the WORLD

SUPERSEDES BELTS & BRACES



LIKES is a new and ... to fit ... requires ... operation. Just a ... (HALF-Belt) ... it just ... this ... to ... Trouser ... suspenders are ... this ... Span Bracer ... silky ... of ... a ... and ... inestimable ... tent ... you ... and ... WHITE and NAVY BLUE, ... sets of buttons. 3d. ... your ... this ... Illustrated ... and ... Bracer ... Illustrated folder sent free on request.

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# BLEMISHES
*coaxed away*
*LIKE MAGIC*

... MUD-TOD ... BLACKHEADS PIMPLES, SUNBURN, SLUGGISH ... WRINKLES AND LINES ... MUD-TOD ... West End Laboratory 34, Chapter Street, London, S.W.1 ... 2/6d., 4/6d. and 7/6d. ... Thoroughly ... directed ... and ... booklet, ...

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# DON'T THROW IT AWAY

**Remember, when you open your bottle of Milton**

When you buy anything from a chemist's shop—what do you do with the literature which you generally find in the packet, or wrapped round the bottle? More often than not you just throw it away, don't you? You are not interested—or you think you already know all that it has to tell you.

*Don't do that with the Milton booklet!* Firstly—because you will be fascinated by this extraordinary document. Secondly—because you will want to keep it for future reference.

The Milton booklet which is packed with every bottle is a mighty and even rather a bulky affair. It had to be—even though not a word in it is wasted. For it deals with all the everyday household uses to which Milton can be put. Things which you yourself experience, and which you have to do with every day.

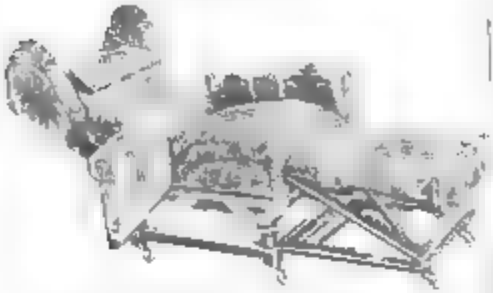
That is why the only way to tell people about Milton was to write a book about it. And the only way to get it to Milton users was to put it in the packet.

But do not, we repeat, let this fact put you off reading it. Nowhere in the world is there any other product to compare with Milton. Remove almost every other trusted preparation from the house—and given a bottle of Milton you would hardly need to miss them. But you must know just what Milton is—what Milton does—and how in each case you use Milton. Hence this book—free with every bottle.

Milton costs sixpence.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*



*A luxurious reclining chair that can be adjusted to various positions.*

### Everything for the Invalid.

Readers who are seeking really practical aids for an invalid or disabled person should visit the London showrooms of an old-established firm which makes a specialty of such things. Here you can see reclining chairs, adjustable to a fraction, so as to achieve exactly the position desired; couches with similar mechanism; reading-stands and tables that extend over the bed for meals and are equally useful for cards, music, needlework, etc. There are also really comfortable bath-chairs and invalid carriages, from sumptuous luxury types down to the cosy wicker-built pattern, together with spinal carriages for open-air treatment, and a range of hand-tricycles or bath-chairs for self-propulsion that meets every requirement. This firm also makes an invalid's carriage which "goes by itself." It is electrically propelled, and the batteries can be charged from the home supply. The carriage is quite noiseless, comfortable to the last degree, and simplicity of control is such that it can be operated by anyone.

### Your Complexion.

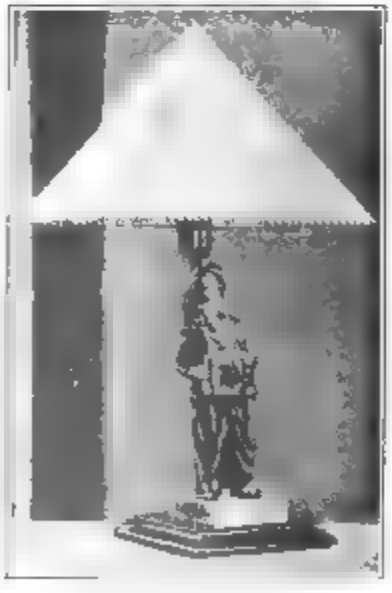
Readers who wish to improve their complexions will be greatly interested in a new beauty-treatment which, it is claimed, gives results vastly superior to cream and powder. This is achieved by means of a transparent liquid that is applied to the face, neck, arms, and hands and gently rubbed in until dry. It will then be seen that all the effects of careful creaming and powdering have been obtained—yet with a most charming *unpowdered* look. The surface is soft and smooth, and will remain so all day without any unsightly caking or shininess; moreover, *it does not rub off!* If it is desired to freshen up the complexion at any time, just a little gentle friction will restore the original effect in a moment. Should you desire to add a special touch of colour or powder, you will find that this preparation gives you a perfect base. Apart from its beautifying aid, the liquid is a splendid skin-tonic. You should certainly try this new treatment, and for that purpose the makers offer (in the United Kingdom only) a handbag-size trial bottle in return for 6d. in stamps. Postage elsewhere is extra. The liquid itself, in gilt-topped flasks, costs 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. from most good chemists or hairdressers.

### Distinctive Table-Lamps.

I am illustrating below one of the latest ideas in the way of electric table-lamps—a particularly attractive figure-study in exquisite colourings. This stands 19½in. high, with a 10in. shade to match, and costs only 25s. complete. A lamp of this kind lends distinction to any room, and the makers offer a wide selection of figures—a Dresden lady, a Chinese goddess, a huntsman and hounds, and many others, designed by well-known artists—the prices ranging from 10s. 6d. to 27s. 6d.

### For the Handy-Man.

A most useful tool for the kit of any "handy-man" of your acquaintance—something that is bound to please him—is an electric soldering-iron. Even men who are clever at most repairing jobs often make a mess of soldering through the difficulty of keeping the "bit" at just the right temperature. This ingenious iron does away with all that trouble. You just plug the flex into the



*A charming and classic table-lamp.*

nearest point, switch on the current, and in four minutes the "bit" is ready for use,

*Continued on page 28.*

'Mansion,' the quick, easy and economical floor polish, gives a mirror-like brilliance to Stained or Parquet Floors and Linoleum.

FOR DARK WOODS USE DARK MANSION

There's a polished home in every tin

Tins, 8d., 10½d., and 1/8. Large Household Tin containing 2 lbs. net, 3/-.

*Chiswick Products, Ltd., Chiswick, W.4*

STOP THAT COLD—TAKE GENASPRIN THE SAFE BRAND

HOW TO GET RID OF INDIGESTION

Those who suffer from indigestion gastritis, acidity flatulence dyspepsia heartburn, etc will be glad to learn that instant relief can be obtained by taking half a teaspoonful of Bisurated Magnesia in a little water immediately after eating or whenever pain is felt. This instantly neutralises the acid that causes all the trouble stops the fermentation, and restores painless normal digestion. It also soothes and heals the acid-inflamed stomach lining and thus guards against the dreaded gastric ulcers to which so many stomach sufferers are liable. Get a 1s. 6d. package of Bisurated Magnesia from your chemist to-day use as directed and you will soon be telling your friends how to get rid of indigestion.

GOLDSTON'S CONJURING TRICKS.

THE YOUNG CONJURER An illustrated book on magic. 2/6 Cabinets of Conjuring Tricks, from 4/6. Large Illustrated Catalogue and Magazine, 1/2. Small List free.

WILL GOLDSTON, LTD., 14, Green Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

(Continued)

remaining at an even temperature until the work is finished. This electric soldering-iron is ideal for all household jobs—mending kettles, saucepans, and so on—model-making, or wireless work. Complete with instructions, resin-cored solder, 6ft. flex and adaptor, it costs only 7s. 6d. post free.

**A Dependable Typewriter.**

Women who write a lot—whether it be correspondence or literary efforts—will find a good portable typewriter a boon indeed, enabling them to get through a great deal of work in a very short time. I have recently been examining a British-made machine which, although very dainty in appearance, is most sturdily built and guaranteed to stand up to the hardest usage. Unlike some "portables," it has a standard four-bank keyboard, and all the bright parts are chromium-plated. The touch is light and pleasant, and the machine is very easy to handle. This excellent little typewriter costs only £13 10s. complete, or it can be purchased on the deferred-payment system.

**A Raincoat for Ladies.**

In our delectable climate nobody ought to be without a reliable raincoat, and the enterprise of a well-known house has now brought these most useful garments within the reach of practically everyone. Though feather-light in weight, their coat is most becoming in appearance, and is guaranteed absolutely waterproof. Its price is amazingly cheap—only 17s. 6d. in unbelted models, or 19s. 6d. belted! As to colour, you can take your choice of nearly twenty delightful shades, ranging from fawn to wine, green or navy blue. Despite their low cost, these coats are very well made, and will keep out wind, chill, and wet. The makers will gladly send an illustrated booklet telling you all about them.

**A Novel Sandwich Flavour.**

The next time you make some sardine sandwiches for tea, try massaging the sardines with just a dash of lemon juice before spreading. This gives a pleasant tang that brings out the flavour.

**Reliable Watch-Bracelets.**

I was talking to a jeweller the other day when a lady came in to have her expanding watch-bracelet repaired, complaining bitterly that the springs were always giving way and causing trouble. When she had departed the jeweller remarked: "Some women are very foolish over things like watch-bracelets, you know. They like the look of one, and buy it without a thought as to the workmanship. Many bracelets are very shoddy affairs, so far as the springs are concerned, and call for endless and often unsatisfactory attention. Now here's a make"—he produced a very handsome bracelet—"which is not only good to look at, but is absolutely guaranteed for five years, the makers test them very rigidly and undertake to maintain and renew any springs that go wrong during the time. A bracelet like this is worth half-a-dozen unknown things." I inspected quite a number of patterns of this guaranteed make, all very beautiful and obviously well-made, and shall be glad to give you the name. Complete with reliable watches, they can be purchased for from £4 15s. upwards, and will give you the satisfaction of knowing that you are wearing a thoroughly dependable article with a five-year "insurance" against vexatious breakages.

**Delectable Sweets.**

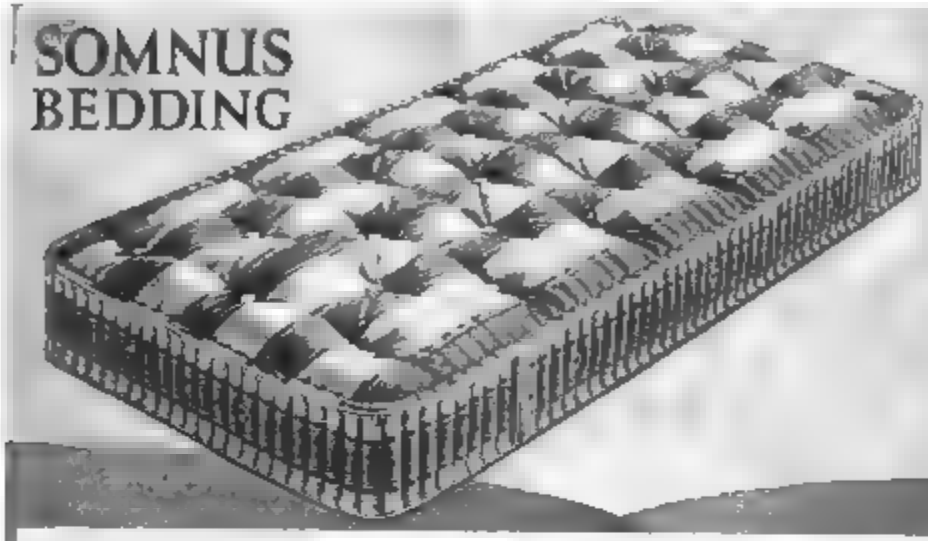
If you happen to be looking for really wholesome sweets for the kiddies, I shall be glad to give you the name of some most delicious confections made of pure treacle, butter, and sugar. The youngsters simply *love* them. They cost only 4d. a quarter pound, and have been popular favourites for over twenty years. Apart from the children, you'll find that every member of the family will like these sweets.

**A Cure for "Ladders."**

Here's something that I feel sure you will be glad to know about! All of us are only too familiar with those maddening "ladders" and tiny holes which appear without warning and so quickly ruin beautiful stockings. Well, let me tell you of a remedy. You buy a dainty little container, containing a special solution, and costing only 9d. (You can carry it in your handbag if you like, because it is non-spillable.) When damage reveals itself, you apply a small quantity of the solution, by means of a special dipper, to the edges of the hole or the top and bottom of the ladder. They are then effectually stopped, the trouble will go no farther. With new stockings, the solution should be applied to the tops, and will then prevent any possibility of damage by the suspender clips. This most useful preparation is not affected by washing, and although it looks white when first put on, the colour disappears as it dries, leaving the treatment practically invisible.

Philosopher

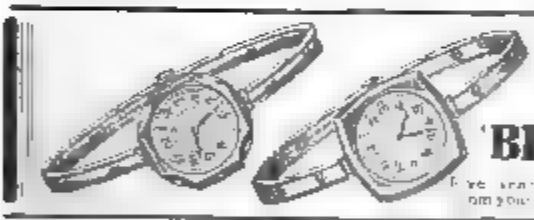
# SOMNUS BEDDING



REMEMBER THE NAME THE *REST* IS EASY

*Ask your Furnisher or write us for booklets. The Bedding House of Rhodes, Carlton Cross Mills, Leeds, and Lotus Street Nottingham*

*London Showrooms 26-27, Lawrence Lane, Cheapside, E.C.2*



To enhance the APPEARANCE and QUALITY of *any* good Wrist Watch wear it with a

**"BRITANNIC" Bracelet**

[illegible] complete with Watches from £4-15-0.

**Mend cracked GRATES yourself—** [illegible] **WITH Purimachos** Plastic Fire Cement 1/12

# CHRONIC NEURITIS!

Mrs. Danby, 48, Sandhurst Grove Harehills, Leeds, writes

[illegible]

Send 1d. Free Box of Testimonials.

**Vitadatio**

Invaluable for Blood Troubles, Liver Kidneys, and Internal Ailments.

Sold by Boots Cashes Timothy Whites & Taylors and Many Be ASD Ltd. [illegible] 6d. extra to U.K. from

VITADATIO, No. 122, Armley, Leeds.

# BREATH is LIFE

Many persons [illegible] suffers from due to [illegible] as Nasal-catarrh [illegible] Catarrh and Sinusitis. [illegible]

**MAXALDING**

[illegible] Maxalding [illegible]

**NATURE'S WAY TO HEALTH**

[illegible] Obtainable [illegible]

COURTLANDT SALDO, aged 21, height 6ft.

A copy of the [illegible] will be sent free of cost, post paid, to [illegible] in any part of the world. Please [illegible] and enclosing

**Mr. A. M. SALDO** Dept. [illegible] Street [illegible] E.C.4

# FACTS ABOUT FEET

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR PARENTS & LOVERS OF CHILDREN

By

## KATHLEEN DANE

A MYSTERIOUS fact not always recognised by parents is that the feet of the average child are usually undeveloped in ratio to the other parts of the body Moreover, their actual functioning is invariably from twelve to eighteen months later than the rest of the body

In view of this, it is wise not to encourage the child to be too ambitious in his walking efforts in the early stages

Discretion must be used particularly at the age of two to three years, when he is rapidly developing weight, otherwise various foot-defects, such as weak ankles and clumsy gait may result later in life

A strong frame and sound healthy bone formation are essential to adequately support the increasing weight of a growing child Without being either fussy or cranky, a great deal may be done towards securing these by supplying a diet rich in bone forming foods such as calcium and phosphate

Vitamin D is also an essential in the diet of growing children the lack of it is the chief cause of rickets and malnutrition of the bony structure Vitamin D is found mainly in milk, butter cheese tomatoes, oranges, and celery

Much can be done towards building up a healthy frame and preventing dental decay by avoiding soft, starchy dishes which do not necessitate thorough chewing This excess of undigested starch becomes deposited in the tissues in the form of unhealthy fat, and does nothing towards bone formation

Brown bread and some type of really hard food should be given to children at one meal at least every day Some of the Swedish types of bread now manufactured in England are particularly suitable for children from the point of view of their beneficial effect on the digestion and teeth and therefore the general health

Combined with a diet inadequate in bone forming elements, there is also to be considered the question of the type of footwear best suited to the normal formation and growth of the foot

Unfortunately the foot is usually the most neglected part of the human body both among adults and children A parent who would not dream of distorting a child's body with tight corsets or ill fitting clothing will frequently neglect the prevention of foot-imperfections by allowing a child to wear badly designed footwear This carelessness becomes obvious later through an unbalanced and ungraceful gait

Sometimes for reasons of expense boots and shoes are handed down from the older children of large families to the younger members This form of economy cannot be too strongly condemned, resulting, as it undoubtedly does, in various forms of foot defects and discomfort for the unfortunate youngsters upon whom it is practised

[illegible] and very often have a perfect horror of appearing [illegible] and playmates Now that boots and shoes of various makes are so cleverly designed on correct anatomical lines without being either clumsy or unshapely it is a simple matter to provide the kiddies with natural form footwear that is not only inconspicuous but very attractive and smart looking

When any slight foot deformity exists it is a great mistake to neglect taking the necessary steps towards its correction on the supposition that the child will 'grow out of it' Specialized and qualified advice should be obtained as soon as the defect is noticed, and before it has developed into a confirmed condition

Many people believe that boots are, on the whole more satisfactory than shoes for children's wear This may possibly be because of the support they are supposed to give to the ankles If however there is any indication of weak ankles, exercises suitable food and rest combined (if necessary) with mechanical corrective measures, will be of more certain benefit than a mere mitigation of the trouble by artificial support.

Turned-in toes are quite a normal condition up to the age of three or four, and only after these ages should they be regarded a defect

Certain inherited imperfections, unfortunately, cannot be altogether eliminated but even these can be largely modified by intelligent care.

# THE STRAND MAGAZINE

## Contents for February, 1933

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Frontispiece Mademoiselle went down the steps very slowly After a few paces she lagged to a standstill, staring with blind eyes at the deserted square.


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| A MISADVENTURE IN PARIS<br>Illustrations by Jack M Faulks | LEONARD MERRICK | 1 5 |
| THE FOX MEDITATES<br>Illustrations by Gordon Nicoll | RUDYARD KIPLING | 126 |
| THE JUICE OF AN ORANGE<br>Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson | P G. WODEHOUSE | 32 |
| SOME REMARKABLE DREAMS<br>A Symposium of Celebrities.<br>Illustrations from Photographs and Decorations by Edgar Spencelay | | 144 |
| MUSICAL MIRANDA<br>Illustrations by Frank Oldham | DENIS MACKAIL | 152 |
| THE MAN ON BEN NA GARVE<br>Illustrations by B M Chandler | H. H. BASHFORD | 162 |
| THE YOUNG ARE SO HARD<br>Illustrations by Grant Reid | STORM JAMESON | 168 |
| BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE ZOO AQUARIUM<br>Illustrations from Photographs | E. G. BOLLENGER | 176 |
| THE TIDAL RIVER<br>Illustrations by Jack M Faulks | "SAPPER" | 184 |
| ACROSTICS | | 195 |
| WRONG FOOT FORWARD<br>Illustrations by Collar | OSMAR E. WHITE | 196 |
| THE CORRECT KIT<br>Illustrations by James Short | LORD DUNSANY | 209 |
| APPROACH BIDS IN CONTRACT BRIDGE | COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE | 209 |
| MR. CRONK AT SEA<br>Illustrations by Trevor Evans | W. A. DARLINGTON | 212 |
| PERPLEXITIES | | 234 |


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**The Index to Volume 84 can be obtained on application to the Publisher.**

**Most of the Original Drawings of the Illustrations in this Magazine are for sale. Terms may be had on application to the Client Department, George Newnes, Ltd., 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.**

BRITISH MANUFACTURE

"Luvisca"

SHIRTS

SOFT COLLARS & PYJAMAS

Perfect in Wear, Taste and Comfort!

Look for the Registered Tab! Sold by Leading Hosiers

Ask for and see you get LUVISCA There's nothing quite as good.

If any difficulty, write CDLS7 London, E.C.1 who will send you

# "STRAND MAGAZINE" AD-PICTURE

## No. 2 RESULT

**The November issue of THE STRAND MAGAZINE contained a Competition picture containing all 70 portions of the advertisements in that number. £500 and 100 SPECIAL PRIZES were offered to readers who submitted lists naming the advertisements from which these portions were taken. The following is a list of these advertisements:**

[illegible] Institute of Engineering Technology, 58 Trinidad, 93, Hayward's Irish Linens, 10, Espanola Mech[illegible] Drawing, 128). C. Lees' Rav[illegible] 28) Sloan Duplex, 28 Shadeine, 28), Brown's Barley Kernels, 30 Courtaulds Linings, 3 Myatt Daypark Razor Blades, 32), Benson's Tropical Watch, 33), Rabe[illegible] [illegible] (Cover 3), Terry's Sculling Exerciser (Cover 4), Oxo, Back Cover.

*[illegible] therefore has not been included in the official solution.*

**The following 67 competitors were successful in finding all the portions, and the Cash Prize of £100 has been equally divided amongst them:**

[illegible]

**The Hour Prizes have been awarded to 100 readers whose entries contained 71 correct portions drawn well out around the printing of these pages and addresses in THE STRAND MAGAZINE, but a full list of winners may be had on application to The Competition Editor, 58, Bow Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2.**

*February,*
1933

*M went down the steps very slowly. After a few paces she lagged to a standstill, staring with blind eyes at the deserted square*

# A MISADVENTURE IN PARIS

## LEONARD MERRICK

I claim to have heard of Mlle. Picard's catastrophe in Paris before the account of it appeared in print. Paris has forgotten all about the matter ages ago, but when it was published it created a good deal of interest, and on that point I shall have something to say presently.

I heard it from the mouth of an old, down-at-heel French poet called Jamaud in the Café of the Cat With Nine Lives. He had come in with Masserey, the Editor of *La Voix* one evening. How the smart editor happened to accompany the old scamp I do not know, but they did enter together, and the proprietor of the café looked gratified, and came forward himself to find comfortable places, with a view of the room for them. They beckoned to me, and I joined them.

And soon, in that garish café, with its vociferous, shabby, weirdly-garbed crowd, one figure caught and held the Editor's attention. She was a little grey-haired woman, very primly dressed, who sat alone regardless of everybody. Her coffee untouched, she was leaning far forward, gazing intensely at the door, while she beat her clasped hands on the table. She did not seem to be conscious of the action, but those black-gloved hands were beaten on the marble incessantly.

"Who is that? What's the matter with her, do you know? She looks very much out of her element here."

"Ah, she is here constantly, *la pauvre malheureuse*," said Jamaud. "Any evening one may see her here, and often in the daytime, too. She comes here after she has taken her terrible walk."

"What terrible walk?"

"She walks every day mechanically to the gates of the Church Notre Dame de Lorette, and then walks uphill and down, and east and west on a frantic search. She searches for a house she slept in once, and could never find again. It must be within a mile of the Church Notre Dame de Lorette.

Vol. lxxxv.—8

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—that is all she knows. She never heard the number of the house, nor the name of the street it stands in; but she thinks she would recognize the doorway if she saw it. And as she never sees it, she comes and waits in this place as a forlorn hope.

'Of what?'

'Of seeing someone who lives, or lived in that house. She will sit here for hours like that, watching the door and praying for the person to come in. Myself, I do not think that they can meet again in this world.'

MASSEREY was eager for more, and Jamaud, who fancied himself as a narrator, responded readily enough. It was evident that he drew upon his imagination for many of the details, but the tale he had to tell was worth hearing for all that. I quote him as well as I can after so long.

'The poor creature you see there is a Mlle Picard,' he said. 'She was a teacher in a school for girls in Pau—a woman much to be admired. Not for her beauty, that is obvious—but for her sterling character. A woman of prompt decision and the most scrupulous honour.'

He paused as Bonnard, the proprietor, reappeared with a saucer of olives. I had never seen him so attentive before. Jamaud waved him away imperiously.

'She was going home for the Easter holidays. Her home was in a village some little distance from Boulogne-sur-Mer. She had not seen it for more than four years, and the prospect of the visit excited her. Behind her rather austere demeanour her nerves were fluttering. Listen.—

'She would have been even more delighted but for the fact that she was to be accompanied, most of the time, by an elderly relative who had always irritated her. As it happened, an aunt of hers was taking the cure at Dax, and the old lady was to meet the train at Dax and travel to Boulogne with her. We have, of course, to spend the night in Paris, the lady had written, and we shall sleep at the hotel I stayed at on my way here. It was very comfortable.

'The misfortune that occurred originated in the old woman's abrupt decision to go two days earlier than had been arranged.

'The sudden change of plan gave Mlle. Picard more to do than pack her clothes precipitately. As the plan had stood at first they were to have slept in Paris on a Wednesday, and she had an appointment in the Latin Quarter for Wednesday evening. It was with a former pupil, who had become an art student there. She had been Mlle Picard's favourite. They had corresponded from time to time, and it had always been understood if ever mademoiselle should be in Paris, they were to meet again. The appointment for Wednesday which had suddenly to be changed was for eight o'clock at this café.'

'A queer choice,' commented Masserey, looking around.

'Why so? Many of the students come here earlier in the evening. It is a respectable café, patronized by Me, and the food is good, and cheap. Certainly mademoiselle would have found it more congenial to see the girl where she lodged, but the rendezvous had been fixed by the girl herself. "Do not toil up to this awful house I beg, dear mademoiselle," she wrote. "I do not think I shall be able to stick it much longer. Give me the pleasure of taking dinner with me at the Café of the Cat With Nine Lives. It is in the rue d'Harcourt, a few paces from the boulevard St. Michel. I shall pray to see you there at eight o'clock."

'*Alors*, mademoiselle scribbled a hurried letter, explaining matters, and saying she would be at the café at eight o'clock on the Monday, instead of the Wednesday. She wrote to her parents that she would be arriving sooner than they thought—and she departed from Pau, clinging tight to her wrist bag.'

'Never mind the wrist bag. What happened?' said the Editor.

'If you butchered the story for *La Voix* till it was the merest fragment, without humanity, or poetry or appeal, even you, with your editorial chopper, could not hack out the wrist bag,' replied Jamaud acridly. And he sat back in sulky silence.

It looked, for a moment, as if we weren't to hear any more; but Masserey said something mollifying, and called the waiter.

'The bag contained her purse and all the money she possessed,' continued the poet. 'In the purse was an ample supply of small change for any needs before the morning, and in the centre pocket of the bag, folded in a precious wad, were seven *billets de banque* of one hundred francs. A fat sum. I do not remember,' he added reflectively, 'ever possessing so much myself.'

'Too much to carry in a wrist bag certainly,' said Masserey. 'In those days, of course, before the war to make a better world,' the sum of seven hundred francs would buy many good things that it won't buy now.'

That was the aunt's opinion, too, when she heard of it. Fortunately she did not hear of it till she had done relating how much she had perspired at Dax, and why she had taken only nineteen baths, instead

of the usual twenty-one, for her reproofs made the rest of the journey very unpleasant She was a masterful, stupid woman who prided herself on her shrewdness, and she could never be induced to remember for more than a few minutes at the time, that the middle-aged teacher should not be addressed as if she were a young girl :—

What an imbecility! she exclaimed You deserve to lose it. You are lucky to have me with you, to keep an eye on it for you To carry seven hundred francs in a wrist bag! One would say you were a millionairess.'

And when she was told of the engagement to dine with the ex-pupil she was censorious again -

*"'... an imbecility," exclaimed the aunt. "You deserve to lose it To carry seven hundred francs in a wrist bag!"*

After travelling all day to go junketting about! *C'est ridicule*. You should go to bed early. We must be at the station in the morning well before half-past eight. Will you never learn prudence?'

'I am quite capable of taking care of myself, and of my wrist bag, too, *ma tante*,' said mademoiselle, dryly. And to change the subject she inquired the name of the hotel they were going to.

The aunt told her the name—it was one of those foreign names that some hotels affect to entice the English and Americans like: 'Hôtel de Middlesex et Manhattan'—but the respite was brief. The danger of the bag's being stolen on the train, and the folly of driving out that evening were referred to exasperatingly again and again. Mademoiselle was relieved beyond measure to see the lamps of the terminus.

"SHE was still more relieved to see the doorway of the hotel. But their reception there was very discomfiting. A room had been reserved for two days later, but there appeared to be no accommodation for them that evening. Paris bulged with strangers. The Exhibition was in full swing, and tourists from all the provinces in France besieged the hotels, to say nothing of half the population of the United States. Paris was a babel of all the tongues of Europe and one heard South Americans screaming at one another on every sidewalk.'

Did they get in?" I asked, hearing Masserey sigh with impatience.

"And I may remark in parenthesis," drawled Janiaud, "that my reference to the crowded condition of Paris is not irrelevant to the history, as you will find in due course if you elect to remain till I conclude. Yes, a room was granted to them at last—after they had stood about the hall for half an hour or more, and agreed to pay a much higher rate than they had meant to do—and by then mademoiselle's patience was near to snapping, and so was *she*. When she prepared to keep her appointment she snapped a refusal of a sensible suggestion of her aunt's—she refused to leave the seven hundred francs behind when she went. It was in this way.

'You are really determined to go?'

'Certainly I am going. It would be extremely rude if I did not. Besides, I shall be very glad to see Jane Vignal again.'

'You do not even know where it is, the place you are going to. How will you get there?'

'I shall take a cab.'

''An extravagance also.'

'Really, my aunt, you must allow me to do as I please with my own.' She hurried into the *cabinet de toilette* to cut the discussion short.

But the other's voice followed her—

'I suppose you are not intending to take all that money with you? You can leave the seven hundred with me. You have more than you will want without that.'

'I prefer to keep it all together.'

'You will do nothing of the sort. If you lost the bag your mother would blame *me* for allowing you to behave so recklessly.'

'My mother recognizes that I am not a child, and I wish very much that you would recognize it too.'

'I recognize that you are inexperienced and self-willed—that you refuse to be guided by those who are twice your age,' the old woman called back acrimoniously.

Mademoiselle could not trust herself to speak again till she returned to the room. Then she said in formal tones, 'I am sorry my arrangements displease you, my aunt. I hope you will have a good night. I shall not be late, and I will be very quiet when I come in, so as not to disturb you.' And ostentatiously picking up the bag from the table under the lady's nose, she went swiftly out.

"On the drive she regretted her ill-temper; she regretted not having taken the advice, which she had known was sound even while she repelled it. But the sights she passed diverted her thoughts. Paris was new to her. It looked enchanting. She hoped the drive would be a long one.

I felt Masserey bounce on the settee protestingly, and threw him a warning glance.

"The aspect of the café, however," went on Janiaud, who luckily had not viewed the bounce in its true light, "was a disagreeable surprise to her when she entered. She had probably never been in a café before in her life except perhaps, with her parents in Boulogne, and the bohemian crew she saw through a haze of smoke took her aback. The ex-pupil was not to be discerned. Mademoiselle stood embarrassed for a moment on the threshold, and then made quickly for a vacant chair close by.

"She had no sooner sat down in it than she wished she had chosen another. Her *vis-à-vis* was a sickly-looking girl of the lower classes who had the air of being deplorably at her ease there, considering how young she was. She had a glass of beer at her elbow, and was playing solitaire with a very dirty pack of cards. Mademoiselle surveyed her with the strongest disapproval.

"As a waiter pounced on her immediately,

*She sank on to the chair again, with her head running. What an imbecile she had been. The girl looked at her curiously.*

she asked for a cup of coffee. She was grieved to find that the ex-pupil frequented places like this, and determined to suggest that they should dine somewhere else. She was glad to see that it lacked only a few minutes to the hour.

But Julie Vignal did not appear at eight o'clock, nor had she appeared by half-past eight. Mademoiselle, much perturbed, began to fear that her letter changing the appointment had not been received. She hesitated whether to remain any longer.

At a quarter to nine she was tired, distressed and vexed, but quite decisive. She signed to the waiter, paid for the coffee and got up to go home. And then she stood gazing vacantly and sank on to the chair again with her head swimming. She didn't know the name of the hotel.

The sickly-looking girl regarded her curiously. 'Are you ill, madame?'

'No,' she said, ungraciously. 'Thank you.'

SHE sat struggling to recall the name. She had not the remotest notion of it—she doubted whether she had even listened when it was said. What an imbecile she had been not to take note of it before she left. Well, her best course now was to drive to Julie Vignal's—she might be able to get a bedroom in the same house. But how dreadfully upset her aunt would be if she woke in the night and missed her—she would think she had met with an accident. And even if she didn't miss her during the night, she would be alarmed in the morning. Mademoiselle was much unnerved. She could not return to-night, or in the morning either. Her mind was a blank to the name. She could do nothing in the morning but go to the station, praying her aunt would be there with all the luggage!

It annoyed her to see that her hands were trembling as she took her handkerchief out of the bag. The vulgar girl's eyes met hers again, and they looked sympathetic. Mademoiselle felt remorseful for having snubbed her.

'A little faint,' she said, 'that's all. I should like some of that water, but there's no glass.'

The girl rapped the table so loudly that mademoiselle was abashed. 'I would take a little brandy too,' the girl advised.

'Ah, no, indeed,' said mademoiselle. She was wondering whether Julie Vignal's lodging was far away. 'Can you tell me if the Rue Hortense is near here?'

'Don't know. I don't belong to this quarter. It is the heart, *n'est-ce-pas*?' Her plaintive voice was rather attractive.

'My heart? Oh, no.'

'You had the air of being suddenly ill. I was afraid for you.'

Mademoiselle was displeased to hear it, for she was a strong advocate of self-control. 'I forget an address,' she explained. 'I am in Paris only for the night, and I have forgotten the name of the hotel.'

'That's bothersome.'

'Yes. I shall have to ask a friend to put me up.'

'A man?'

'Certainly not,' said mademoiselle, stiffly. 'A young girl, a pupil of mine.'

'I was only wondering whether you'd find a man in so early. A girl is different, of course—a girl like that. The Rue Hortense? No, I haven't the foggiest. If you take a taxi the driver'll know.'

'Oh, I shall take a taxi,' said mademoiselle, rising. 'Thank you for your kindness.'

'No occasion, madame,' said the girl politely. 'Listen, I know of a respectable hotel quite near. If the young lady isn't at home, and you care to come back, I shall be here for a long time.'

'I should think you would be better off at home,' mademoiselle could not refrain from saying.

'Ah, no. Coke and lamp oil cost money. To have a glass of beer in a café is an economy—I get light and warmth thrown in,' replied the girl.

Mademoiselle found herself thinking of the answer in the taxi.

She intended to go in and wait if Julie Vignal was out, and she was within an ace of discharging the taxi when the house was discovered at last. It was well she did not. She was told shortly that Mlle. Vignal had left.

'Left?' she said aghast. 'When did she leave? She should have had a letter from me yesterday.'

'She left two—three days ago,' the slattern replied in surly tones. 'A letter? One came afterwards. I told the postman to take it away.'

'Can you tell me where she has gone?'

'I know nothing at all about it.'

Mademoiselle drooped forlornly to the taxi. Paris no longer looked enchanting to her. It looked brutally forbidding. Actually grateful for the prospect of the vulgar girl's interest, she went back to the Café of the Cat with Nine Lives.

She was however distrustful of her recommendation.

'How do you know the hotel is respectable? I thought you said you were a stranger in this quarter?'

'Not that. I said I didn't live here. I come over sometimes. I used to pose for

an American lady who stayed there She was very well satisfied with it'

'To pose for her? Do you mean you are a professional model?'

'Only they don't want me much any more I have been ill, and my body has got so thin. If you'd like to look at the hotel, I'll show you where it is'

'It's very good of you. Yes, I should like to see it My having no luggage will look strange?'

'It's not *their* funeral if you pay first'

'Oh, I have quite enough money with me' she said, tapping her wrist bag. She reflected that she would *not* have had enough if she had left the seven hundred francs behind The girl shot an envious glance at the bag and then looked quickly away

It was nearly half-past ten by now and mademoiselle had had nothing to eat since some sandwiches she had taken with her on the tram.

'I should like something to eat before we go' she said. 'If—perhaps you would let me invite you? Could we get some eggs or something here quickly? I'm very tired and I have to be up early in the morning'

So incredible as the situation appeared to her in moments Mlle. Picard and the girl she had disapproved had supper together before they went

Rain was falling when they left the café but as the hotel was said to be close by it would be an extravagance to pay another cab fare! They walked fast along the glistening boulevard and up a street across the way

'There it is,' said the girl, pointing to a lighted sign. And when they entered, the little hall looked peaceful, and the *patronne* knitting behind the window of the office had a homely air

But at the demand for a room her head was shaken. 'None was free. I regret,' she said

'Madame is a friend of the American lady who stayed with you so long' Mlle Hoyt urged the model shamelessly

'Ah *bien!* Mlle Hoyt! She was charming, Mlle Hoyt I hope she is well, madame? You understand? I should be only too happy to accommodate you but it is not possible We have no more than sixteen rooms in the house, and they are all occupied Listen, you might perhaps get a room at the hotel further on'

'Thank you' said mademoiselle heavily

'No luck' remarked the girl 'Come, let us try the next one'

'I am giving you a lot of trouble and you are getting very wet,' said mademoiselle

'That is no novelty One is always wet or cold here What a beastly place! You may have Paris! I hate it.'

'"Aren't you a Parisienne?"

'I? Not much! My home is Algiers and it would be no calamity to be back

'"Can't you manage to go?"

'It is my dream *Hélas*, it needs a heap of money—I must have money when I get there. They will not run out to feed me for nothing when I arrive. But, yes, I shall go—I only live for that Touch wood I may fall sick again, and die in Paris Here we are. I suppose this is the one she meant'

It was full.

BACK on the boulevard they tried three other hotels without success. Rain was falling more heavily now, and at this stage mademoiselle would have faced another cab fare with profound relief, but on wet nights vacant cabs are not plentiful in Paris. Each time she saw the lamps of an approaching taxi she stopped, and waved violently but it rushed by her regardless and too despondent to attempt conversation any more, she trudged beside the girl in silence

It seemed to her a great distance to the hotel they were bound for—an enormous one, she heard, containing hundreds of rooms Across the long, narrow street they traversed, she had a fleeting glimpse of a park, and in happier circumstances would have been curious to know what park it was. Then they came unexpectedly to small featureless hotels, squeezed between darkened shops, and went in with a sudden hope that quickly died

At last she was in the gare of an empty boulevard, much wider than the first one, with trees on the centre walk and soon the hotel they sought was in view The sight of its immensity raised her confidence, though its threatened luxury made her quake at the thought of what she would have to pay. Behind that multitude of windows surely one room must be tenantless?

'The interior looked still more affrightingly expensive—and conscious that she would weakly assent now to almost any terms that could be asked she strove to stifle the moaning of her habitual thrift.

'The effort was unnecessary. A listless young reception clerk, lone in the expanse of official splendour, had nothing more satisfactory to say than that he could not guarantee it, but there might possibly be a room available in the morning.

'Mademoiselle went down the steps very slowly. It was midnight. After a few paces she lagged to a standstill, staring with blind eyes at the deserted square opposite, and the girl saw that her mouth was twitching

*She pulled out the pink stocking that had escaped concealment under the bolster It contained seven billets de banque of one hundred francs.*

"'Listen,' exclaimed the girl. 'It isn't fit for you—it's very hard, and it's so small—I am ashamed to offer it, but it would be better than nothing If you will accept, you can have my bed.

Mademoiselle was too much startled to speak for a moment She hesitated woefully Every fibre of her body craved to lie down, but she could not turn the girl out of her bed and she shrank from sharing it with her

Where would you sleep? she faltered

There is a chair In that

Is it likely? I can't thank you enough but——

Ah, it isn't worth the trouble to find reasons,' said the girl, brusquely I understand—I am not of your class.'

Mademoiselle was moved, as well as startled now

I accept your hospitality very gratefully indeed, she said. But only if you will let me have the chair

"'Right-o,' cried the girl. 'Come on then! We go by Métro.'

"'Do you live far away?'

"'Montmartre. We'll have to change. Round here! We go from St. Sulpice.'

"What station do I take tickets for?' inquired mademoiselle when they approached the booking office

Just say 'two seconds.' One doesn't have to say what station on the Métro—it's all the same price

'Though she was prepared to find it poor the gaunt naked poverty of the room made mademoiselle shiver when the feeble lamp was lighted She sat down in the frowsy chair and removed her shoes. Then, rising to take off her coat and hat, she saw that the girl had begun to strip the bed

"'You aren't used to sitting up all night,' she explained. 'I'm going to put clean sheets on it for you. You needn't be afraid, they've had plenty of time to dry—I don't often change them.'

It was no easy matter to convince her that mademoiselle would not occupy the bed

"'Oh well' she said, 'if you won't! But you shall have the quilt to put over you or you'll damn well freeze to death. I shall be all right—I'll pile my clothes on top of me How that lamp stinks, doesn't it?'

"'Does it always smell like that?'

"'Always. It's its little nature. I'll put it out, if you like?'

"'I think we could manage without it,' agreed mademoiselle, glancing at the skylight. 'No one can see in?'

No one nearer than *le bon Dieu*. I regret I can't offer you a cigarette.'

I don't smoke. Do you?

I used to, but I have given it up, to make economies. You can use this valise to put your feet on, and I'll bring you the quilt, if you're ready. I hope you will sleep well, madame.'

"'I am almost asleep now,' said mademoiselle. Good night, my child.

But her sleep was fitful. The thought of the train was in her mind, and she kept waking with a start, and creeping to the patch of floor under the skylight to consult her watch. She was harassed, too, in reflecting that she would make a handsome gift to the girl on going—she realized that except for a coin or two remaining in the purse, she had nothing but the wad of seven *billets* of one hundred francs in the pocket of the bag. A gift of a hundred francs was immensely beyond her means—and there would be no time to get change.

She woke once more to find with dismay that it was half-past seven. She had no idea how long it would take to reach the Gare du Nord. Dipping the cleanest corner of the towel into the tiny ewer, she hastily rubbed her face with it and put on her things as fast as she could. The girl lay sleeping heavily, her thin neck crooked on her skinny arms, and for a few seconds the teacher stood thoughtful, with something deeper than appreciation, something warmer than pity in her gaze. She unclasped the pocket of the wrist bag without repining now that she was going to give so much. The pocket was empty.

In the first sick moment of panic she saw nothing but her plight, and then she smiled bitterly at herself, in thinking how easy a prey she had been. A woman of middle age—and this beat of the streets had duped and robbed her, had no doubt hoped for a chance to rob her from the start.

I have plenty of money with me. Simpleton.' She remembered the covetous glance the girl had cast, thought of the strange, the extraordinary eagerness she had shown to accompany her. And she had actually felt grateful!

Fury possessed her. If she couldn't recover the money quickly she was beggared—and the wretched creature would of course deny the charge, resist, revile her, perhaps scream the house down. The police might have to be sent for—there might be a delay of hours, days. She strode to the bed and as she bent to seize the girl saw a portion of a pink stocking that had escaped concealment under the bolster. There was a glimpse of paper in it. She pulled the stocking out. It contained seven *billets de banque* of one hundred francs.

'She thrust them in the bag, and fighting back the temptation to wake and upbraid the girl, hurried down the stairs. The thief, the loathsome little thief, she gasped.

No cab was visible in the drab street, but to the left a woman with bread under her arm was shuffling round a corner in list slippers and a bed jacket. Overtaking her, mademoiselle asked anxiously in which direction a taxi was likeliest to be seen, and sped through melancholy roads of high, pale houses and downward along a street lined with small shops till she found herself beside a church that faced a wide thoroughfare. There was a taxi crawling there—and she reached the Gare du Nord to behold her aunt white with apprehension and anger, at the entrance.

I had begun to feel sure you had been killed,' the old woman panted. 'Get your ticket quick! Stop a minute, you haven't enough money there—I took it out to mind for you when you were washing. Here are your seven hundred francs.'

'It was as if the darkness of death closed upon mademoiselle.'

JANIAUD paused again. At the table opposite, the haggard woman still watched the door.

She made no reproach, she couldn't speak—she was seeing the girl wake to discover the loss, she was hearing her cries, he resumed. A thief! And she didn't know how to reach her victim, had never heard her name, or the name of the street. All she knew was that it was in Montmartre.

Mademoiselle did not leave Paris with her aunt. She spent the morning in Montmartre, sobbing to Heaven to help her find the street—and all the time the cries that she imagined were in her ears. How long had it taken the girl to save so much money? Years, perhaps. At long, long intervals the small tattered *billets* she had hoarded, the sous perhaps changed with rapture for a *billet* of a hundred francs. Another mile stone on the road! All stolen from her by the woman she had helped. The lady she had respected. I am not of your race, God! What she was thinking of her now!

Later in the day she went to the café craving information, the merest hint, that might enable her to find the girl. 'Yes, they remembered the girl at her table. She came there occasionally, once in a month or so, but she was not a regular client; they had no idea who she was. Did madame desire to leave any message?'

If she comes in, ask her for God's sake, to let me see her,' mademoiselle

entreated Say I have something valuable to restore to her that I took by mistake Till to-morrow I am at an hotel—take a note of its name, and mine To-morrow I will return and give you my new address

And next she went to a *commissariat de police*, and told her story

'If the girl has nothing to fear, she will report the affair at the *commissariat* of her *arrondissement*,' they said It is possible you may hear something in Montmartre

But in Montmartre they knew nothing of the matter

She pleaded desperately Can't you help me?

Madame Montmartre is extensive—there are many houses in it, replied the official at the desk 'Have you no idea at all what part of it you were in?'

She could only repeat I am a stranger Montmartre was all I heard

'Did you observe the name of the station you got out at?'

If I did I don't remember it'

And when you left the house there was no feature of the street that caught your eye?'

I was greatly agitated and hurrying very much. I saw a shabby street, and a woman passing that is all'

Was your way to the church uphill, or down?'

Down

The streets you went through do you recall anything of them?

I remember one thing In the last street of all just before I came to the church the front of a house was painted grotesquely in vivid colours

An oil-and-colourman's What of the church? Can you say anything about it, however vague?

I noticed, she said as the taxi turned that there were stalls of vegetables on the other side of the church

The points you mention indicate Notre Dame de Lorette' said the official Unfortunately you say you had walked for twenty minutes before you got there All I can tell you, madame, is that the house you seek is probably within twenty minutes' walk of the Church Notre Dame de Lorette *Enfin* give me your address. If there is anything to report we will communicate with you

Next day she was directed to the Church, and tramped uphill and down again, and east and west without avail as I have told you She did it daily And every night she inquired and waited in vain at the café She had notices displayed in the shop windows of Montmartre and she removed to a cheap room there In the streets her eyes were for ever searching the faces of the passers-by as she walked with those dreadful cries shrilling in her head

'Then a dread that she had been trying to thrust from her haunted her day and night She was racked by the terror that the girl had destroyed herself Once she read that the body of a young girl had been found in the Seine, and she made her way palsied to the Morgue The face of the dead, stark body she shuddered to see was *not* the thin face of the girl she had robbed For all that I would wager the girl is not alive.'

IT was two o'clock and the café was almost empty The woman rose now, and went forlornly out

'Poor soul,' said Masserey

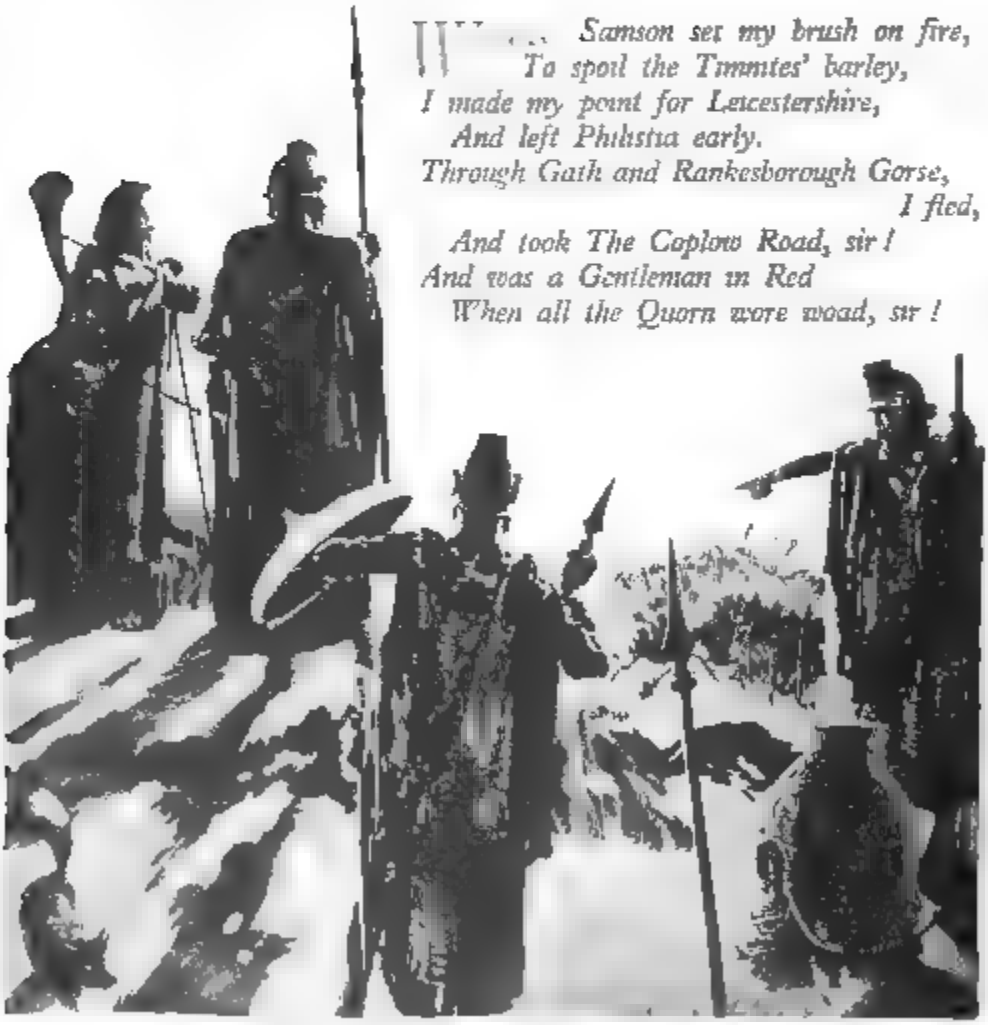
His account of the catastrophe in *Labour* created a good deal of interest as I said at the beginning, and though he wrote of a certain café in the Latin Quarter' it was soon identified People used to go there, from all parts of Paris, to look at Mlle Picard and the morbid curiosity yielded Bonnard, the proprietor a rich harvest Some of us found it horrible to see smart people arriving to stare at a stricken woman as if she were a show

The vogue waned when it was rumoured that Arnaud had invented the whole story as an advertisement of the café in consideration of free drinks for the season and that poor 'Mlle Picard' was a professional actress, who had told Bonnard, I spit at the ten francs a night You shall pay what my performance is worth, or I come no more'.'

# THE FOX

## RUDYARD

*When Samson set my brush on fire,*
*To spoil the Timmites' barley,*
*I made my point for Leicestershire,*
*And left Philistia early.*
*Through Gath and Rankesborough Gorse, I fled,*
*And took The Coplow Road, sir!*
*And was a Gentleman in Red*
*When all the Quorn wore woad, sir!*



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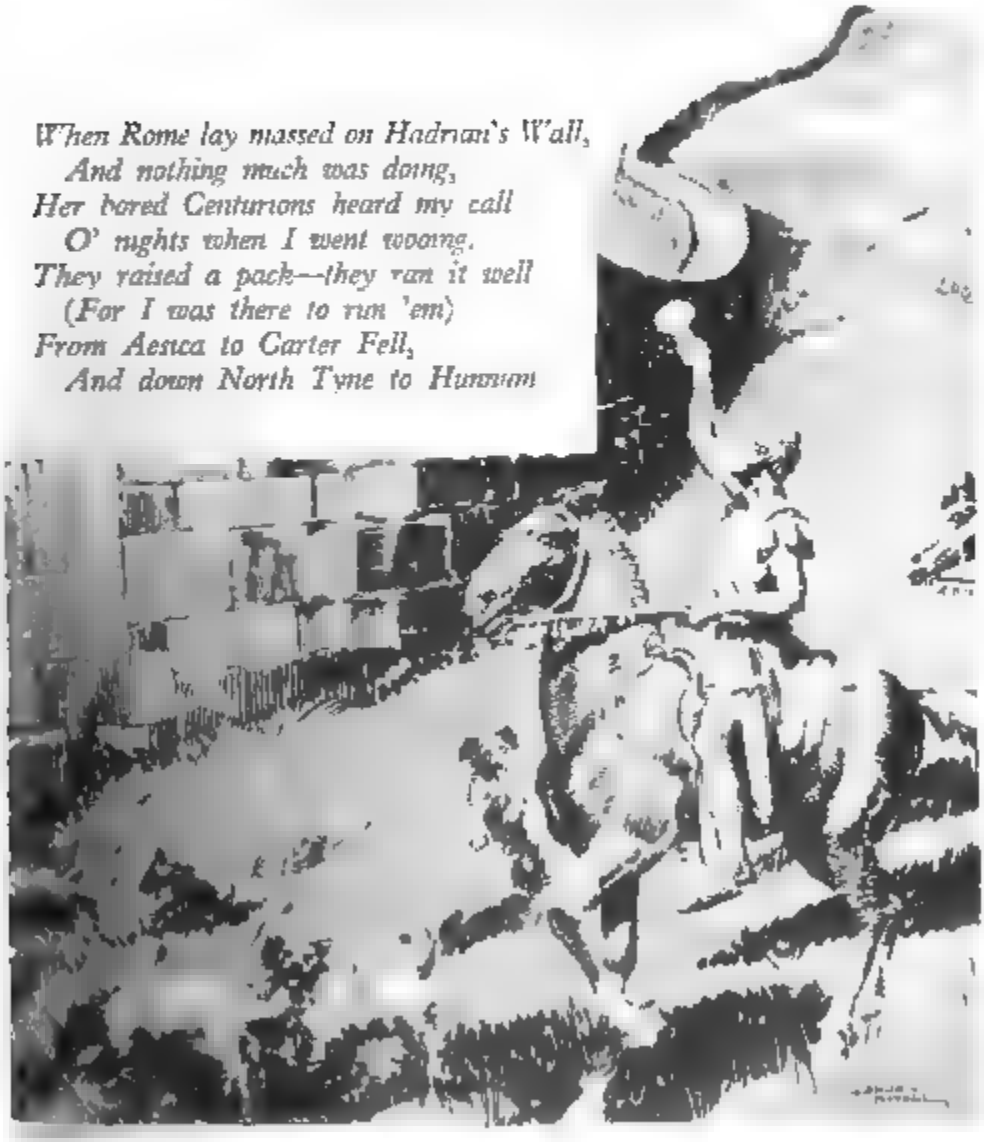
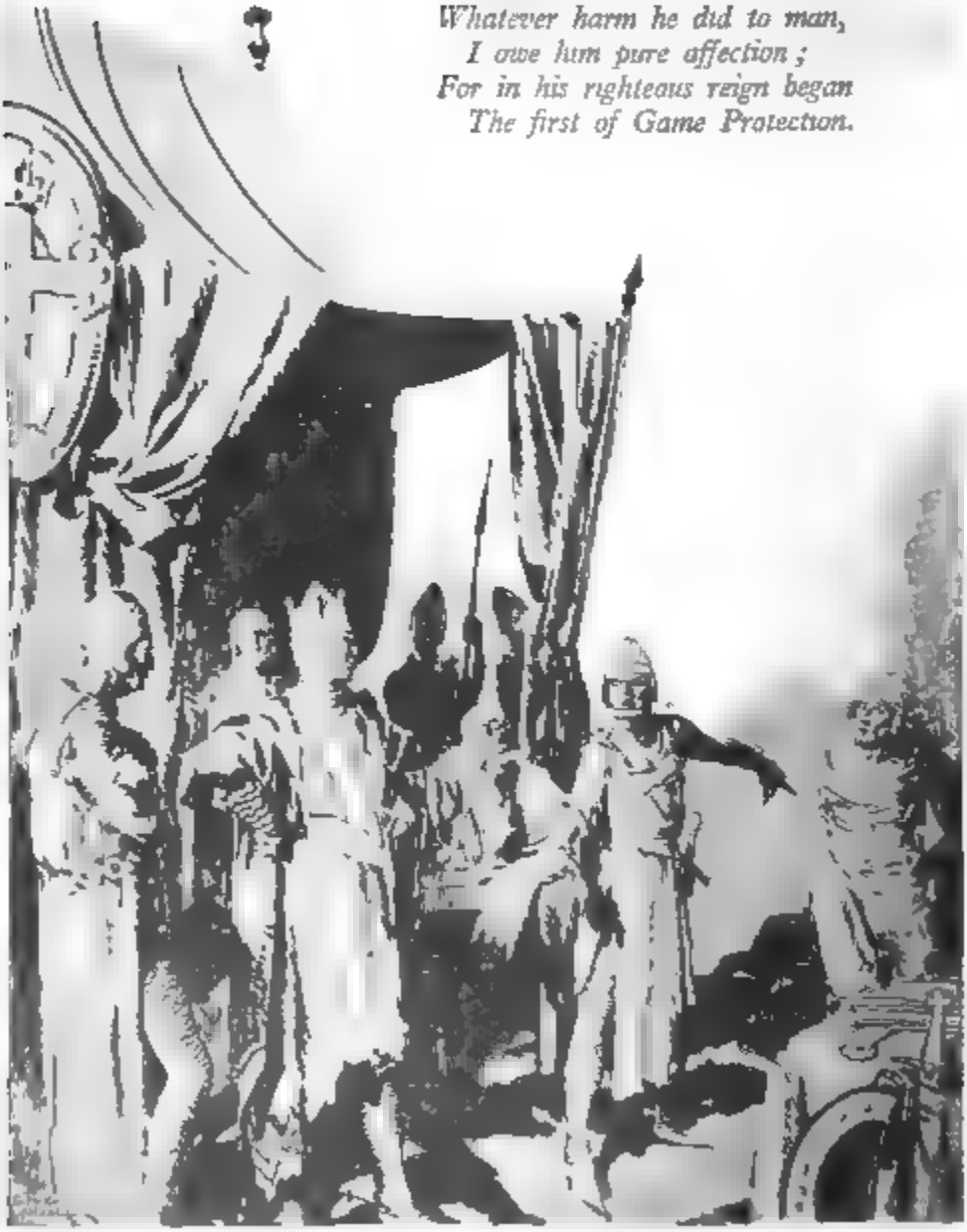
# MEDITATES

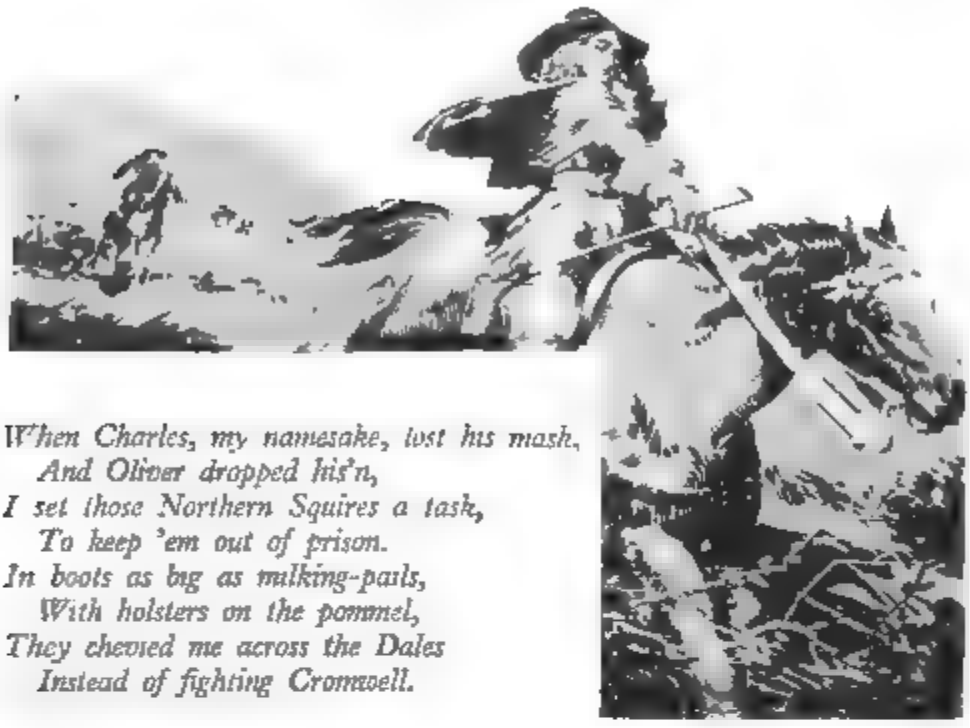
# KIPLING

*When Rome lay massed on Hadrian's Wall,*
*And nothing much was doing,*
*Her bored Centurions heard my call*
*O' nights when I went wooing.*
*They raised a pack—they ran it well*
*(For I was there to run 'em)*
*From Aesica to Carter Fell,*
*And down North Tyne to Hunnum*

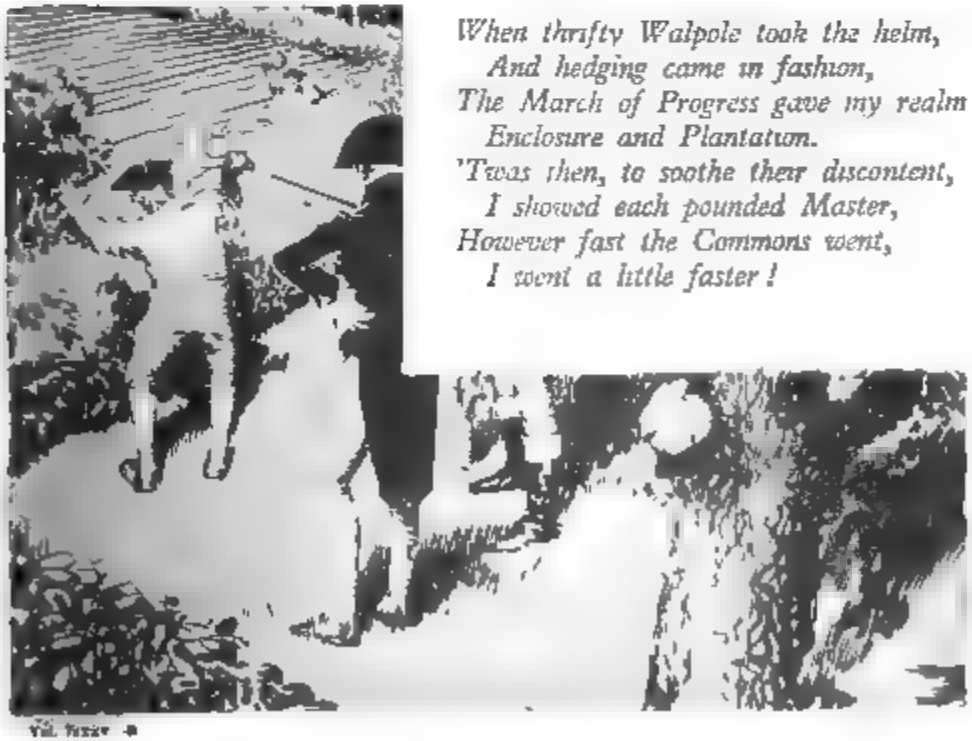


*When William landed, hot for blood,*
*And Harold's hosts were smitten,*
*I lay at earth in Battle Wood*
*While Domesday Book was written.*
*Whatever harm he did to man,*
*I owe him pure affection;*
*For in his righteous reign began*
*The first of Game Protection.*



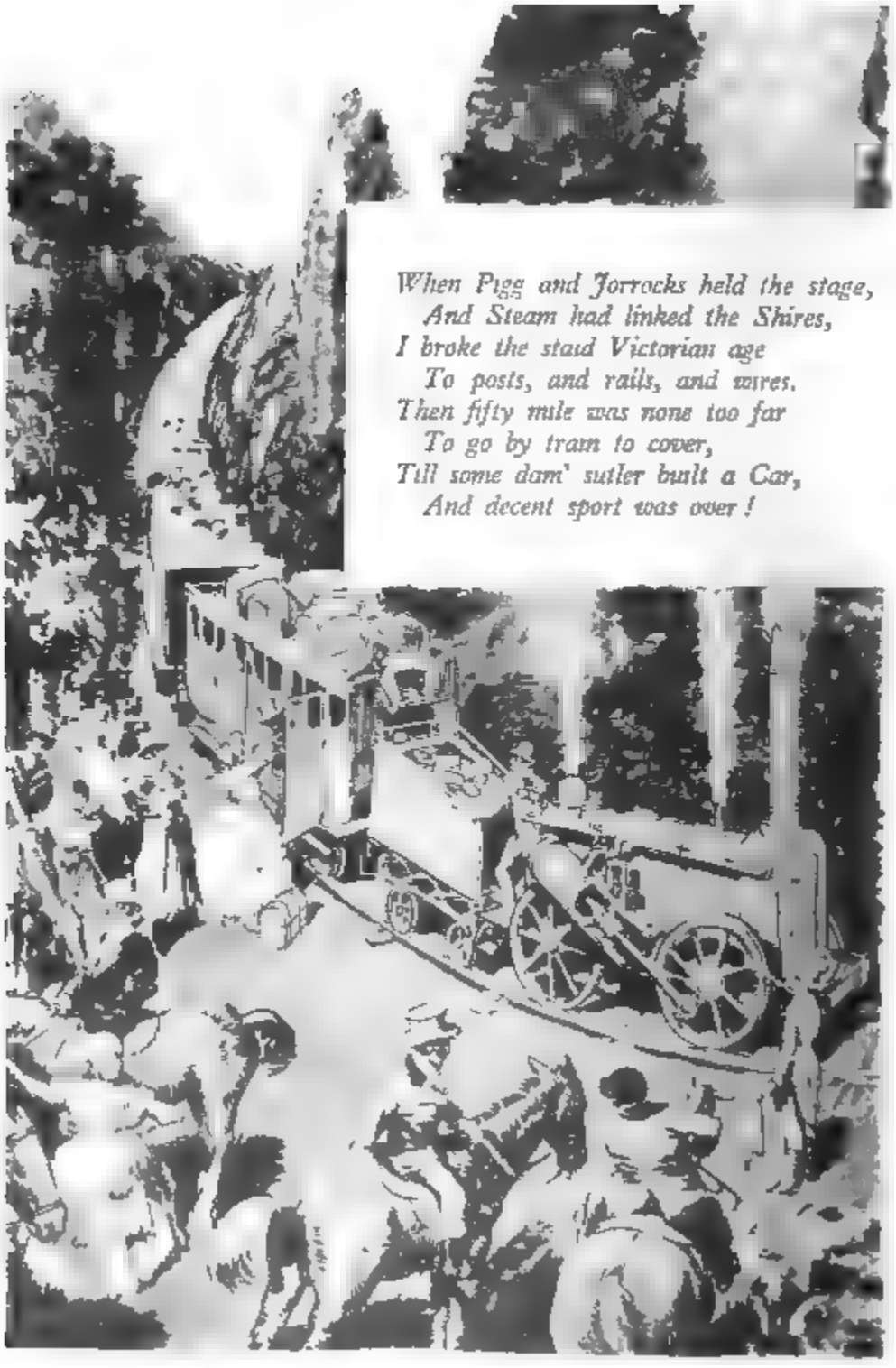


*When Charles, my namesake, lost his mash,*
*And Oliver dropped his'n,*
*I set those Northern Squires a task,*
*To keep 'em out of prison.*
*In boots as big as milking-pails,*
*With holsters on the pommel,*
*They chevied me across the Dales*
*Instead of fighting Cromwell.*

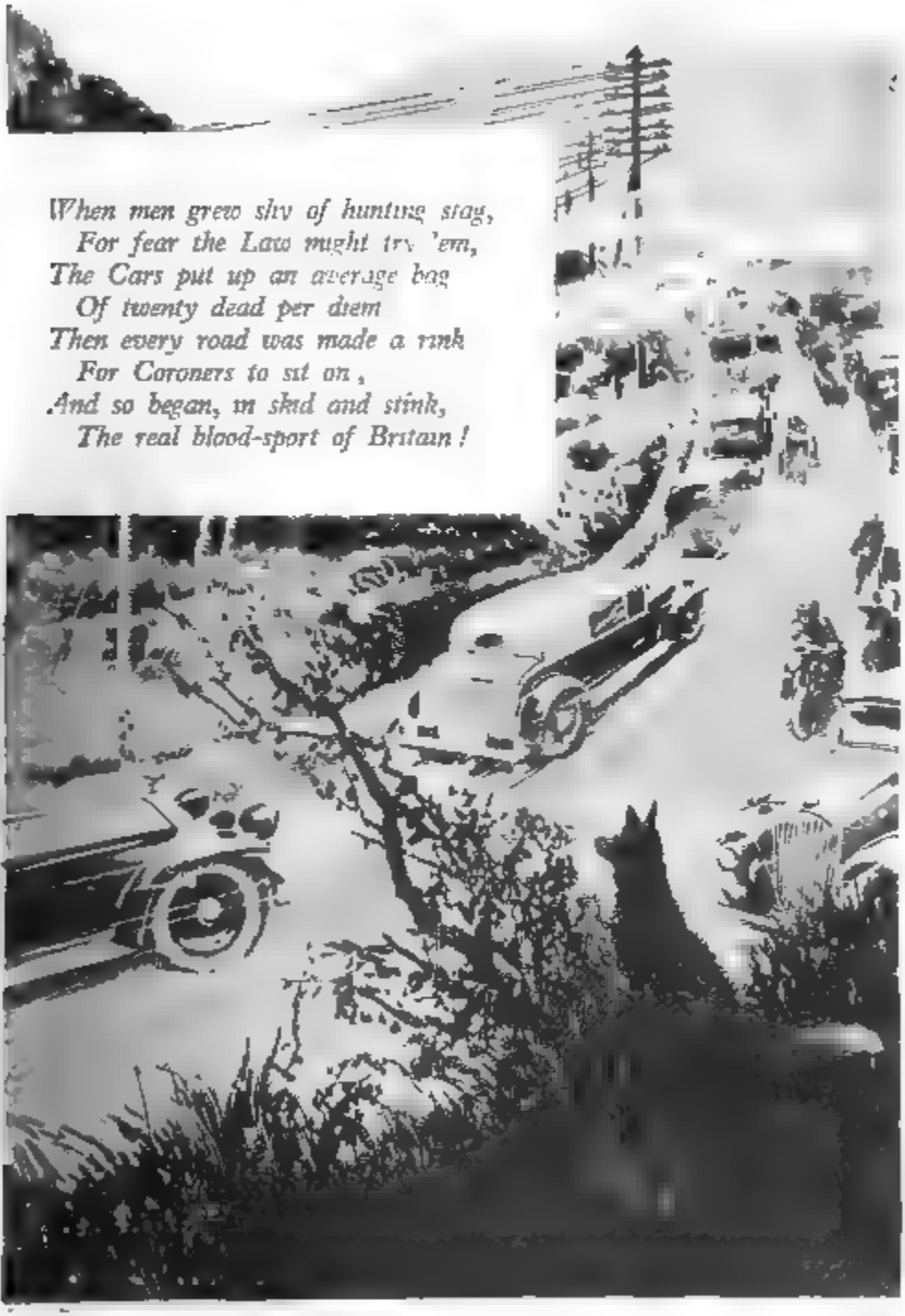


*When thrifty Walpole took the helm,*
*And hedging came in fashion,*
*The March of Progress gave my realm*
*Enclosure and Plantation.*
*'Twas then, to soothe their discontent,*
*I showed each pounded Master,*
*However fast the Commons went,*
*I went a little faster!*

# The Fox Meditates



*When Pigg and Jorrocks held the stage,*
*And Steam had linked the Shires,*
*I broke the staid Victorian age*
*To posts, and rails, and wires.*
*Then fifty mile was none too far*
*To go by tram to cover,*
*Till some dam' sutler built a Car,*
*And decent sport was over!*



*When men grew shy of hunting stag,*
*For fear the Law might try 'em,*
*The Cars put up an average bag*
*Of twenty dead per diem*
*Then every road was made a rink*
*For Coroners to sit on,*
*And so began, in skid and stink,*
*The real blood-sport of Britain!*

# THE JUICE OF AN ORANGE

## P. G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrated
GILBERT WILKINSON

A SUDDEN cat shot in through the door of the bar-parlour of the Angler's Rest, wearing the unmistakable air of a cat which has just been kicked by a powerful foot. At the same moment there came from without sounds indicative of a strong man's wrath and recognizing the voice of Jno Biggs the pub's popular landlord, we stared at one another in amazement. For Jno had always been celebrated for the kindliness of his disposition. The last man, one would have thought, to raise a number eleven shoe against a faithful friend and good mouser.

It was a well-informed Rum and Milk who threw light on the mystery.

"He's on a diet," said the Rum and Milk. "On account of gout."

Mr Mulliner sighed.

"A pity," he said, "that dieting, so excellent from a purely physical standpoint, should have this unfortunate effect on the temper. It seems to sap the self-control of the stoutest."

"Quite," said the Rum and Milk, "My stout Uncle Henry——"

And yet," proceeded Mr Mulliner, "I have known great happiness result from dieting. Take, for example, the case of my distant connexion Wilmot."

"Is that the Wilmot you were telling us about the other night?"

"Was I telling you about my distant connexion Wilmot the other night?"

"The fellow I mean was a Nodder at Hollywood, and he found out that the company's child star, Johnny Bingley, was a midget so to keep his mouth shut they made him an executive, and he married a girl named Mabel Potter."

"Yes, that was Wilmot. You are mistaken however, in supposing that he married Mabel Potter at the conclusion of that story."

"But you distinctly said she fell into his arms."

"Many a girl has fallen into a man's arms," said Mr Mulliner, gravely, "only to wriggle out of them at a later date."

We left Wilmot, as you very rightly say (said Mr Mulliner) in an extremely satisfactory position, both amatory and financial. The only cloud there had ever been between himself and Mabel Potter had been due, if you recollect, to the fact that she considered his attitude towards Mr Schnellenhamer the head of the corporation, too obsequious and deferential. She resented his being a Nodder. Then he was promoted to the rank of executive so there he was, reconciled to the girl he loved and in receipt of a most satisfactory salary. Little wonder that he felt that the happy ending had arrived.

One effect of his new-found happiness on my distant connexion Wilmot was to fill him with the utmost benevolence and good-will

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*"What I wish to ask you, Mr. Schnellenhamer, is that," exclaimed the playwright. "Am I to be hit over the head with crusty rolls?"*

towards all humanity His sunny smile was the talk of the studio, and even got a couple of lines in Louella Parsons's column in the *Los Angeles Examiner* Love I believe, often has this effect on a young man He went about the place positively seeking for ways of doing his fellow human beings good turns And when one morning Mr Schnellenhamer summoned him to his office, Wilmot's chief thought was that he hoped that the magnate was going to ask some little favour of him because it would be a real pleasure to him to oblige

HE found the head of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation looking grave

Times are hard Mulliner said Mr Schnellenhamer

"And yet," replied Wilmot cheerily "there is still joy in the world still the happy laughter of children and the singing of blue birds

'That's all right about blue birds' said Mr Schnellenhamer 'but we've got to cut down expenses We'll have to have some salary-slicing

Wilmot was concerned. This seemed to him morbid

Don't dream of cutting your salary Chief he urged "You're worth every cent of it Besides reflect. If you reduce your salary it will cause alarm People will go about saying that things must be in a bad way It is your duty to the community to be a man and bite the bullet and no matter how much it may irk you, to stick to your eight hundred thousand dollars a year like glue"

"I wasn't thinking of cutting my salary so much" said Mr Schnellenhamer "Yours more, if you see what I mean"

'Oh, mine?" cried Wilmot, buoyantly "Ah that's different That's another thing altogether Yes, that's certainly an idea If you think it will be of assistance and help to ease matters for all these dear chaps on the P F lot, by all means cut my salary About how much were you thinking of?"

'Well, you're getting fifteen hundred a week

"I know I know" said Wilmot It's a lot of money"

"I thought if we said seven hundred and fifty from now on

It's an awkward sort of sum" said Wilmot dubiously "Not round if you follow me. I would suggest five hundred

Or four?"

Four, if you prefer it"

'Very well said Mr Schnellenhamer Then from now on we'll put you on the books as three It's a more convenient sum than four," he explained 'Makes less bookkeeping"

Of course said Wilmot Of course What a perfectly lovely day it is, is it not? I was thinking as I came along here that I had never seen the sun shining more brightly One just wanted to be out and about, doing lots of good on every side Well, I'm delighted if I have been able to do anything in my humble way to make things easier for you Chief It has been a real pleasure

And with a merry Tra-la he left the room and made his way to the commissary where he had arranged to give Mabel Potter lunch

She was a few minutes late in arriving, and he presumed that she had been detained on some matter by Mr Schnellenhamer whose private secretary if you remember she was When she arrived, he was distressed to see that her lovely face was overcast, and he was just about to say something about blue birds when she spoke abruptly

'What's all this I hear from Mr Schnellenhamer?"

'I don't quite understand' said Wilmot

'About your taking a salary cut

'Oh that I see I suppose he drafted out a new agreement for you to take to the legal department. Yes said Wilmot, 'Mr Schnellenhamer sent for me this morning and I found him very worried poor chap There is a world-wide money shortage at the moment you see, and industry is in a throttled state and so on He was very upset about it However we talked things over and fortunately we found a way out I've reduced my salary It has eased things all round

Mabel's face was stoney

Has it?' she said bitterly 'Well let me tell you that, as far as I'm concerned it has done nothing of the sort You have failed me Wilmot You have forfeited my respect. You have proved to me that you are still the same cold asparagus-backboned worm who used to cringe to Mr Schnellenhamer I thought, when you became an executive that you would have the soul of an executive I find that at heart you are still a Nodder The man I used to think you the strong dominant man of my dreams would have told Mr Schnellenhamer to take a running jump up an alley at the mere hint of a cut in the weekly envelope Ah, yes, how woefully I have been deceived in you I think that we had better consider our engagement at an end

Wilmot tottered

You are not taking up my option?" he gasped

No You are at liberty to make arrangements elsewhere I can never marry a poltroon"

But, Mabel"

"No I mean it Of course she went

on, more gently, "if one day you should prove yourself worthy of my love that is another matter. Give me evidence that you are a man among men, and then I am not saying. But, meanwhile, the scenario reads as I have outlined."

And with a cold, averted face she passed on into the commissary alone.

THE effect of this thunderbolt on Wilmot Mulliner may readily be imagined. It had never occurred to him that Mabel might take this attitude towards what seemed to him an action of the purest altruism. Had he done wrong, he asked himself. Surely to bring the light of happiness into the eyes of a motion-picture magnate was not a culpable thing. And yet Mabel thought otherwise, and, so thinking had given him the air. Life, felt Wilmot, was very difficult.

For some moments he debated within himself the possibility of going back to his employer and telling him he had changed his mind. But no, he couldn't do that. It would be like taking chocolate from an already chocolated child. There seemed to Wilmot Mulliner nothing that he could do. It was just one of those things. He went into the commissary, and, taking a solitary table at some distance from the one where the haughty girl sat, ordered Hungarian goulash, salad, two kinds of pie, ice-cream, cheese, and coffee. For he had always been a good trencher-man, and sorrow seemed to sharpen his appetite.

And this was so during the days that followed. He found himself eating a good deal more than usual because food seemed to dull the pain at his heart. Unfortunately, in doing so, it substituted another in his stomach.

The advice all good doctors give to those who have been disappointed in love is to eat lightly. Fail to do this, and the result is as inevitable as the climax of a Greek tragedy. No man, however gifted his gastric juices, can go on indefinitely brooding over a lost love and sailing into the starchy foods simultaneously. Came a day when indigestion gripped Wilmot, and for almost the first time in his life he was compelled to consult a physician. And the one he selected was a man of drastic views.

On rising," he told Wilmot, "take the juice of an orange. For luncheon, the juice of an orange. And for dinner the juice——" he paused a moment before springing the big surprise—"of an orange. For the rest I am not an advocate of nourishment between meals, but I am inclined to think that should you become faint during the day—or possibly the night—there will be no harm in your taking—well, yes—I really see no reason why you should not take the juice of—let us say—an orange."

Wilmot stared. His manner resembled that of a wolf on the steppes of Russia who, expecting a peasant, is fobbed off with a wafer biscuit.

"But aren't you leaving out something?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"How about steaks?"

"Most decidedly no steaks."

"Chops, then?"

"Absolutely no chops. But the way I figure it out—check my figures in case I'm wrong—you're suggesting that I live solely on orange-juice."

"On the juice of an orange," corrected the doctor. "Precisely. Take your orange. Divide it into two equal parts. Squeeze on a squeezer. Pour into a glass—or cup," he added, for he was not the man to be finicky about small details—"and drink."

Put like that, it sounded a good and even amusing trick, but Wilmot left the consulting-room with his heart bowed down. He was a young man who all his life had been accustomed to take his meals in a proper spirit of seriousness, grabbing everything there was and, if there was no more, filling up with biscuits and butter. The vista which this doctor had opened up struck him as bleak to a degree, and I think that, had not a couple of wild cats at this moment suddenly started a rather ugly fight inside him, he would have abandoned the whole project.

The cats, however, decided him. He stopped at the nearest market and ordered a crate of oranges to be dispatched to his address. Then, having purchased a squeezer, he was ready to begin the new life.

IT was some four days later that Mr Schnellenhamer, as he sat in conference with his fellow-magnate, Mr Levitsky—for these zealous men, when they had no one else to confer with, would confer with one another—was informed that Mr Eustiss Vanderleigh desired to see him. A playwright this Vanderleigh of the Little Theatre school, recently shipped to Hollywood in a lot of twelve.

"What does he want?" asked Mr Schnellenhamer.

"Probably got some grievance of some kind," said Mr Levitsky. "These playwrights make me tired. One sometimes wishes the old silent days were back again."

"Ah," said Mr Schnellenhamer, wistfully. "Well, send him in."

Eustiss Vanderleigh was a dignified man. His voice was high and plaintive.

"Mr Schnellenhamer," he said, "I wish to know what rights I have in this studio."

*A tigerish light came into Wilmot's eyes, and he leapt to his feet, his face working violently. "Stop that," he cried.*

'Listen . . . ' began the magnate, truculently

Eustiss Vanderleigh held up a slender hand

"I do not allude to my treatment as an artist and a craftsman With regard to that I have already said my say Though I have some slight reputation as a maker of plays, I have ceased to complain that my rarest scenes are found unsuitable for the medium of the screen Nor do I dispute the right, however mistaken, of a director to assert that my subtlest lines are—to adopt his argot— cheesy ' All this I accept as part of the give-and-take of Hollywood life But there is a limit, and what I wish to ask you, Mr Schnellenhamer, is this. Am I to be hit over the head with crusty rolls ? "

" Who s been hitting you over the head with crusty rolls ?

" One of your executives A man named Mulliner The incident to which I allude occurred to-day at the luncheon hour in the commissary I was entertaining a friend at the meal and, as he seemed unable to make up his mind as to the precise nature of the refreshment which he desired, I began to read aloud to him the various items on the bill of fare I had just mentioned roast pork with boiled potatoes and cabbage, and was about to go on to Mutton Stew Joan Clarkson when I was conscious of a violent blow or buffet on the top of the head And turning I perceived this man Mulliner with a shattered roll in his hand and on his face the look of a soul in torment Upon my inquiring into his motives for the assault, he merely muttered something which I understood to be You and your roast pork,' and went on sipping his orange-juice—a beverage of which he appears to be inordinately fond, for I have

seen him before in the commissary, and he seems to take nothing else. However, that is neither here nor there. The question to which I desire an answer is this—How long is this going on? Must I expect, whenever I enter the studio's place of refreshment, to

undergo furious assaults with crusty rolls, or are you prepared to exert your authority and prevent a repetition of the episode?'

Mr Schnellenhamer stirred uneasily.

'I'll look into it.'

'If you would care to feel the bump or contusion——?"

No, you run along. I'm busy now with Mr Levitsky."

The playwright withdrew and Mr. Schnellenhamer frowned thoughtfully.

'Something'll have to be done about this Mulliner,' he said. "I don't like the way he's acting. Did you notice him at the conference yesterday?'

'Not specially. What did he do?"

"Well, listen," said Mr Schnellenhamer. he didn't give me the idea of wanting service and selfless co-operation. Every time I said anything, it seemed to me he did something funny with the corner of his mouth. Drew it up in a twisted way that looked kind of—what's that word beginning with an 's'?"

'Cynical?"

'No, a snickle is a thing you cut corn with. Ah, I've got it, Sardinic. Every time I spoke he looked sardinic."

Mr Levitsky was out of his depth.

Like a sardine, do you mean?'

"No, not like a sardine. Sort of cold and sneering, like Glutz of the Medulla-Oblongata the other day on the golf-links, when he asked me how many I'd taken in the rough and I said one.'

'Maybe his nose was tickling."

'Well, I don't pay my staff to have tickling noses in the company's time. If they want tickling noses, they must have them after hours. Besides, it couldn't have been that, or he'd have scratched it. No, the way it looks to me, this Mulliner has got too big for his boots and is seething with rebellion. We've another story-conference

this afternoon. You watch him and you'll see what I mean. Kind of tough and ugly he looks, like something out of a gangster film.

I get you. Sardinic.

"That's the very word," said Mr Schnellenhamer. "And if it goes on I'll know what to do about it. There's no room in this corporation for fellows who sit around drawing up the corners of their mouths and looking sardinical!"

Or hitting playwrights with crusty rolls.

"No, there you go too far," said Mr Schnellenhamer. "Playwrights ought to be hit with crusty rolls."

Meanwhile, unaware that his bread-and-butter—or, as it would be more correct to say, his orange-juice—was in danger, Wilmot Mullmer was sitting in a corner of the commissary glowering sullenly at the glass which had contained his mid-day meal. He had fallen into a reverie, and was musing on some of the characters in History whom he most admired—Genghis Khan—Jack the Ripper—Attila the Hun.

There was a chap, he was thinking. That Attila. Used to go about taking out people's eyeballs and piling them in neat heaps. The ideal way, felt Wilmot, of getting through the long afternoon. He was sorry Attila was no longer with us. He thought the man would have made a nice friend.

For the significance of the scene which I have just described will not have been lost on you. In the short space of four days dieting had turned my distant connexion Wilmot from a thing of almost excessive sweetness and light to a soured misanthrope.

IT has sometimes seemed to me (said Mr Mullmer thoughtfully sipping his hot Scotch and lemon) that to the modern craze for dieting may be attributed all the unhappiness which is afflicting the world today. Women, of course, are chiefly responsible. They go in for these slimming systems, their sunny natures become warped, and they work off the resultant venom on their menfolk. These, looking about them for someone they can take it out of, pick on the males of the neighbouring country who themselves are spoiling for a fight because their own wives are on a diet, and before you know where you are war has broken out with all its attendant horrors.

This is what happened in the case of China and Japan. It is this that lies at the root of all the unpleasantness in the Polish Corridor. And look at India. Why is there unrest in India? Because its inhabitants eat only an occasional handful of rice. The day when Mahatma Ghandi sits down to a good juicy steak and follows it up with roly-poly pudding and a spot of Stilton you will see the end of all that nonsense of Civil Disobedience.

Till then, we must expect Trouble, Disorder—in a word, Chaos.

However, these are deep waters. Let us return to my distant connexion Wilmot.

In the brief address which he had made when prescribing, the doctor, as was his habit, had enlarged upon the spiritual uplift which might be expected to result from an orange juice diet. The juice of an orange, according to him, was not only rich in the essential vitamins, but [illegible] properties which strengthened and enlarged the soul, raised the picture he had drawn of the soul squaring its elbows and throwing out its chest had done quite a good deal at the time to soothe the anguish that had afflicted Wilmot when receiving his sentence.

After all, the young man had felt, unpleasant though it might be to suffer the physical torments of a starving python, it was jolly to think that one was going to become a sort of modern St Francis of Assisi.

And now, as we have seen, the exact opposite had proved to be the case. Now that he had been called upon to convert himself into a mere vat or container for orange-juice, Wilmot Mullmer had begun to look on his fellow-man with a sullen loathing. His ready smile had become a tight-lipped sneer. And, as for his eye, once so kindly, it could have been grafted on to the head of a man-eating shark, and no questions asked.

The advent of a waitress, who came to clear away his glass, and the discovery that he was alone in the deserted commissary awoke Wilmot to a sense of the passage of time. At two o'clock he was due in Mr Schnellenhamer's office, to assist at the story conference to which the latter had alluded in his talk with Mr Levitsky. He glanced at his watch and saw that it was time to be moving.

His mood was one of sullen rebellion. He thought of Mr Schnellenhamer with distaste. He was feeling that, if Mr Schnellenhamer started to throw his weight about, he Wilmot Mullmer, would know what to do about it.

In these circumstances, the fact that Mr Schnellenhamer, having missed his lunch that day owing to the numerous calls upon him, had ordered a plateful of sandwiches to be placed upon his desk takes upon itself a little of the dramatic. A scenario-writer informed of the facts of the case would undoubtedly have thought of those sandwiches as Sandwiches of Fate.

It was not at once that Wilmot perceived the loathsome objects. For some minutes only the familiar features of a story-confer-

ence penetrated to his consciousness. Mr Schnellenhamer was criticizing a point that had arisen in connexion with the scenario under advisement.

'This guy as I see it' he was saying, alluding to the hero of the story, 'is in a spot. He's seen his wife kissing a fellow and, not knowing it was really her brother, he's gone off to Africa shooting big game, and here's this lion has got him down and is starting to chew the face off him. He gazes into its hideous eyes, he hears its fearful snarls, and he knows the end is near. And where I think you're wrong, Levitsky, is in saying that that's the spot for our big cabaret sequence.'

'A vision,' explained Mr Levitsky.

'That's all right about visions. I don't suppose there's a man in the business stronger for visions than I am. But only in their proper place. What I say is what we need here is for the United States Marines to arrive. Aren't I right?'

He paused and looked about him like a hostess collecting eyes at a dinner-party. The Yessers yessed. The Nodders' heads bent like poplars in a breeze.

'Sure I am,' said Mr Schnellenhamer. 'Make a note, Miss Potter.'

And with a satisfied air he reached out and started eating a sandwich.

Now the head of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Motion Picture Corporation was not one of those men who can eat sandwiches aloofly and, as it were, surreptitiously. When he ate a sandwich there was no concealment or evasion. He was patently for all eyes to see, all ears to hear, a man eating a sandwich. There was a brio, a gusto, about the performance which stripped it of all disguise. His sandwich flew before him like a banner.

The effect on Wilmot Mulliner was stupendous. As I say, he had not been aware that there were sandwiches among those present, and the sudden and unexpected crunching went through him like a knife.

Poets have written feelingly of many a significant and compelling sound: the breeze in the trees, the roar of waves breaking on a stern and rock-bound coast, the coo of doves in immemorial elms, and the song of the nightingale. But none of these can speak to the very depths of the soul like the steady champing of beef sandwiches when the listener is a man who for four days has been subsisting on the juice of an orange.

In the case of Wilmot Mulliner it was as if the sound of those sandwiches had touched a spring, releasing all the dark forces within him. A tigerish light had come into his eyes, and he sat up in his chair bristling.

The next moment, those present were startled to observe him leap to his feet, his face working violently.

'Stop that!'

Mr Schnellenhamer quivered. His jaw and sandwich fell. He caught Mr Levitsky's eye. Mr Levitsky's jaw had fallen too.

'Stop it! I say!' thundered Wilmot. 'Stop eating those sandwiches immediately!'

He paused, panting with emotion. Mr Schnellenhamer had risen and was pointing a menacing finger. A deathly silence held the room.

And then abruptly into this silence there cut the shrill, sharp, wailing note of a siren. And the magnate stood spellbound, the words 'You're fired' frozen on his lips. He knew what that sound meant.

ONE of the things which have caused the making of motion-pictures to be listed among the dangerous trades is the fact that it has been found impossible to dispense with the temperamental female star. There is a public demand for her, and the Public's word is law. The consequence is that in every studio you will find at least one gifted artist, the mere mention of whose name causes the strongest to tremble like aspens. At the Perfecto-Zizzbaum this position was held by Hortensia Burwash, the Empress of Molten Passion.

Temperament is a thing that cuts both ways. It brings in the money, but it also leads to violent outbursts on the part of its possessor similar to those so common among the natives of the Malay States. Every Hortensia Burwash picture grossed five million, but in the making of them she was extremely apt, if thwarted in some whim, to run amok, sparing neither age nor sex.

A procedure accordingly had been adopted not unlike that in use during air raids in the War. At the first sign that the strain had become too much for Miss Burwash, a siren sounded, warning all workers on the lot to take cover. Later a bugler blowing the All Clear would inform those in the danger zone that the star had now kissed the director and resumed work on the set.

It was this siren that had interrupted the tense scene which I have been describing.

For some moments after the last note had died away, it seemed as though the splendid discipline on which the Perfecto-Zizzbaum organization prided itself was to triumph. A few eyeballs rolled, and here and there you could hear the sharp intake of breath, but nobody moved. Then from without there came the sound of running footsteps, and the door burst open, revealing a haggard young assistant-director with a blood-streaked face.

'Save yourselves!' he cried.

There was an uneasy stir.

'She a heading this way!'

Again that stir. Mr. Schnellenhamer rapped the desk sharply.

'Gentlemen! Are you afraid of an unarmed woman?'

The assistant-director coughed.

'Not unarmed, exactly," he corrected. 'She's got a sword.'

'A sword?'

'She borrowed it off one of the Roman soldiery in "Hail, Cæsar." Seemed to want it for something. Well, good-bye, all.' said the assistant-director.

Panic set in. The stampede was started by a young Nodder who, in fairness be it said, had got a hatpin in the fleshy part of the leg that time when Miss Burwas was so worried over 'Hearts Aflame.' Reckless of all rules of precedence, he shot silently through the window. He was followed by the rest of those present, and in a few moments the room was empty save for Wilmot, brooding with folded arms, Mabel Potter, crouched on top of the filing cabinet, and Mr. Schnellenhamer himself, who, too stout to negotiate the window, was crawling into a convenient cupboard and softly closing the door after him.

To the scene which had just concluded Wilmot Mudliner had paid but scant attention. His whole mind was occupied with the hunger which was gnawing his vitals.

*Wilmot flung open the door of the cupboard, and Mr Schnellenhamer came out on all-fours.*

and that strange loathing for the human species which had been so much with him of late. He continued to stand where he was, as if in some dark trance.

From this he was aroused by the tempestuous entry of a woman with make-up on her face and a Roman sword in her hand.

"Ah-h-h-h-h!" she cried.

Wilmot was not interested. Briefly raising his eyebrows and baring his lips in an animal snarl, he returned to his meditations.

Hortensia Burwash was not accustomed to a reception like this. For a moment she stood irresolute, then, raising the sword she brought it down with a powerful follow-through on a handsome inkpot which had been presented to Mr. Schnellenhamer by a few admirers and well wishers on the occasion of the Perfecto Zuzbaum's foundation.

"Ah-h-h-h-h," she cried again.

WILMOT had had enough of this foolery. Like all the Mulliners, his attitude towards Woman had until recently been one of reverence and unfading courtesy. But with four days' orange-juice under his belt, he was dashed if he was going to have females carrying on like this in his presence. A considerable quantity of the ink had got on his trousers, and he now faced Hortensia Burwash, pale with fury.

"What's the idea?" he demanded hotly. "What's the matter with you? Stop it immediately and give me that sword."

The temperamental star emitted another "Ah-h-h-h-h!" but it was but a half-hearted one. The old pep had gone. She allowed the weapon to be snatched from her grasp. Her eyes met Wilmot's. And suddenly, as she gazed into those steel hard orbs, the fire faded out of her, leaving her a mere weak woman face to face with what appeared to be the authentic caveman. It seemed to her for an instant, as she looked at him, that she had caught a glimpse of something evil. It was as if this man who stood before her had been a Fiend about to Seize Hatchet and Slay Six.

As a matter of fact, Wilmot's demeanour was simply the normal one of a man who every morning for four days has taken an orange, divided it into two equal parts, squeezed on a squeezer, poured into a glass or cup, and drunk—who has sipped the juice of an orange in the midst of rollicking lunchers doing themselves well among the roasts and hashes, and who, on returning to his modest flat in the eventfall has got to work with the old squeezer once more. But Hortensia Burwash, eyeing him trembled. Her spirit was broken.

"Messing about with ink," grumbled Wilmot, dabbing at his legs with blotting-paper. "Silly horse-play, I call it."

The star's lips quivered. She registered Distress.

"You needn't be so cross," she whimpered.

"Cross!" thundered Wilmot. He pointed wrathfully at his lower limbs. "The best ten-dollar trousers in Hollywood!"

"Well, I'm sorry."

"You'd better be. What did you do it for?"

"I don't know. Everything sort of went black."

"Like my trousers."

"I'm sorry about your trousers." She sniffed miserably. "You wouldn't be so unkind if you knew what it was like."

"What what was like?"

"This dieting. Fifteen days with nothing but orange-juice."

The effect of these words on Wilmot Mulliner was stunning. His animosity left him in a flash. He started. The stony look in his eyes melted, and he gazed at her with a tender commiseration, mingled with remorse that he should have treated so harshly a sister in distress.

"You don't mean you're dieting?"

"Yes."

Wilmot was deeply stirred. It was as if he had become once more the old, kindly gentle Wilmot, beloved by all.

"You poor little thing! No wonder you rush about smashing inkwells. Fifteen days of it! My gosh!"

"And I was upset, too, about the picture."

"What picture?"

"My new picture. I don't like the story."

"What a shame!"

"It isn't true to life."

"How rotten! Tell me all about it. Come on, tell Wilmot."

"Well, it's like this. I'm supposed to be starving in a garret, and they want me with the last remnants of my strength to write a letter to my husband, forgiving him and telling him I love him still. The idea is that I'm purified by hunger. And I say it's all wrong."

"All wrong?" cried Wilmot. "You're right, it's all wrong. I never heard anything so silly in my life. A starving woman's heart wouldn't soften. And, as for being purified by hunger, purified by hunger, my hat! The only reason which would make a woman in that position take pen in hand and write to her husband would be if she could think of something nasty enough to say to make it worth while."

"That's just how I feel."

"As a matter of fact, nobody but a female goof would be thinking of husbands at all at a time like that. She would be thinking of roast pork——"

"... and steaks——"

and chops——
and chicken casserole——
and kidneys sautés——
and mutton curry——'
and doughnuts——
and layer-cake——
and peach pie, mince pie, apple pie, custard pie, and pie *à la mode*," said Wilmot. "Of everything, in a word, but the juice of an orange. Tell me, who was the half-wit who passed this story, so utterly alien to human psychology?"

'Mr Schnellenhamer—I was coming to see him about it.'

"I'll have a word or two with Mr Schnellenhamer. We'll soon have that story fixed. But what on earth do you want to diet for?"

"I don't want to. There's a weight clause in my contract. It says I mustn't weigh more than eight stone. Mr Schnellenhamer insisted on it."

A grim look came into Wilmot's face.

"Schnellenhamer again, eh? This shall be attended to."

He crossed to the cupboard and flung open the door. The magnate came out on all-fours. Wilmot curtly directed him to the desk.

"Take paper and ink, Schnellenhamer, and write this lady out a new contract, with no weight clause."

'But, listen——'

"Your sword, madam, I believe?" said Wilmot, extending the weapon.

"All right," said Mr Schnellenhamer hastily. 'All right. All right.'

And, while you're at it,' said Wilmot, "I'll take one, too, restoring me to my former salary.

"What was your former salary?" asked Hortensia Burwash.

'Fifteen hundred.'

"I'll double it. I've been looking for a business manager like you for years. I didn't think they made them nowadays. So firm. So decisive. So brave. So strong. You're the business manager of my dreams.'

Wilmot's gaze, straying about the room, was attracted by a movement on top of the filing cabinet. He looked up, and his eyes met those of Mabel Potter. They yearned worshippingly at him, and in them there was something which he had no difficulty in diagnosing as the love-light. He turned to Hortensia Burwash.

"By the way, my *fiancée* Miss Potter."

"How do you do?" said Hortensia Burwash.

'Pleased to meet you," said Mabel.

'What did you get up there for?' asked Miss Burwash, puzzled.

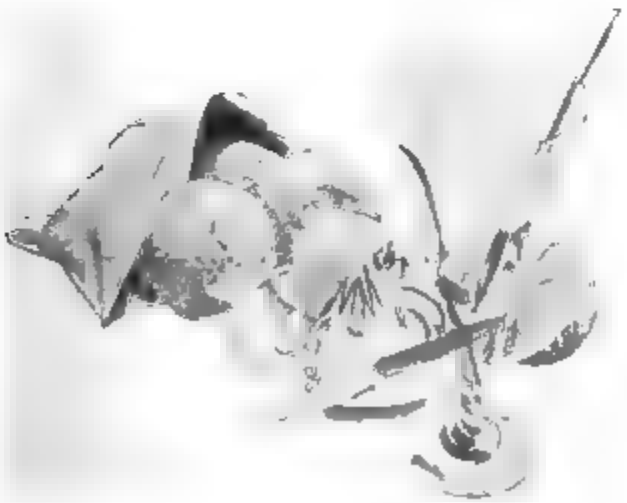
'Oh, I thought I would," said Mabel.

Wilmot, as became a man of affairs, was crisp and businesslike.

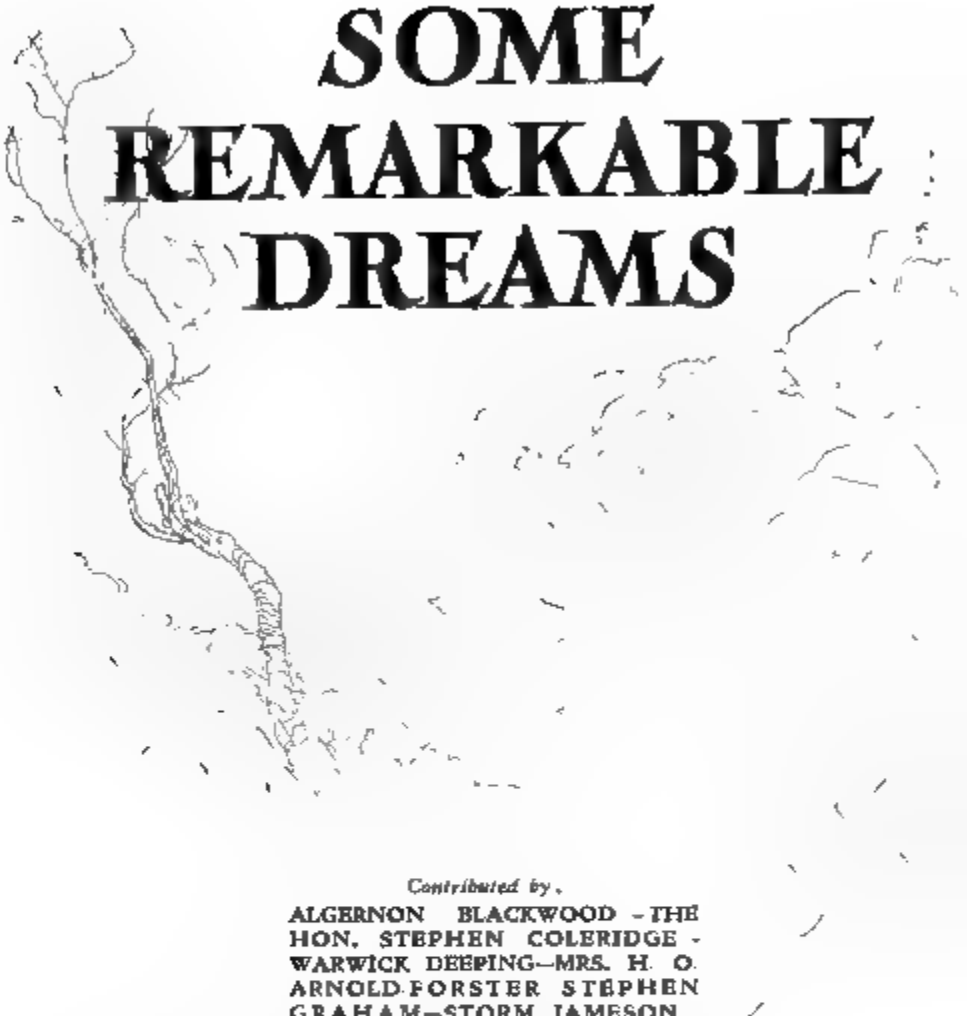
'Miss Burwash wishes to make a contract with me to act as her manager," he said. "Take dictation, Miss Potter."

"Yes, sir," said Mabel.

At the desk, Mr Schnellenhamer had paused for a moment in his writing. He was trying to remember if the word he wanted was spelled "clorse" or 'clorze.'



# SOME REMARKABLE DREAMS



*Contributed by*,

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD—THE HON. STEPHEN COLERIDGE—WARWICK DEEPING—MRS. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER STEPHEN GRAHAM—STORM JAMESON C. R. W. NEVINSON—MORLEY ROBERTS.

Does one's brain work while one is asleep? Professor Sir Michael Sadler presumes that it does, but as he forgets his dreams immediately on waking he is not able definitely to say that in solving problems he owes anything to dream-guidance. He admits, however, that new and illuminating ideas come to him shortly after waking up, and that these may possibly be dream-inspired. Similarly Mr. Ian Hay, the famous novelist, finds that in the early hours, between sleeping and waking, his mind works very clearly "in a subconscious sort of way," and that he is able to straighten out some knotty little bit of plot or dialogue which has been bothering him during the day.

Many famous men and women readily admit that dreams have come to their aid at times when difficulties in their professional work have been encountered; many others have had dream-experiences which, though not precisely solving problems, have been of an extraordinary nature (such as that of Mr. Morley Roberts, for example), as the following examples, narrated in response to a request from THE STRAND MAGAZINE, will show.

## ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.

Some twenty-five years ago, while writing a book ("The Education of Uncle Paul") I was living in a village in the Jura Mountains above Neuchâtel, and it was my

habit to spend the entire day with a notebook wandering over the hills and forests. The notebook, often containing a whole chapter, was very precious to me.

One evening, on getting back late from a day's wandering, the book was missing. It was neither in my pocket or my knapsack. I had lost it. The loss, naturally, worried me very much. Having covered many miles of hill and forest during the long summer's day, it seemed hopeless to go out next day and search. I could not even remember exactly what my route had been.

I was very tired and slept deeply, but during the night I was once—for a second or two merely—just aware of turning over in bed. It was no more than that—the consciousness that my body turned from one side to the other, for I certainly did not wake. In that brief second, however, I saw something. I saw a shallow rivulet of clear running water that danced and rippled in the sunshine, and just beneath the surface lay the outline of my black notebook. I saw it very distinctly, its outline wavering a little as the ripples ran over it. It lay in about two inches of water. I saw the white limestone pebbles on which it rested.

Properly speaking, this was not a dream, for there was no sequence of events, and nothing happened. The next second I was in deep sleep again.

In the morning, luckily, I recalled this vivid picture. I also, after some reflection, recalled having knelt down to drink from a tiny rivulet. Though uncertain as to its exact whereabouts, I thought I might find the spot, and I set out for the tramp of many hours again. I did find it. I found my notebook, too, precisely as the picture of the night had shown it to me. It lay there, under some two inches of clear water with bright sunlight gleaming on. My pencil notes, too, were quite legible.

The explanation here, of course, is simple. It had slipped from pocket or knapsack as I knelt to drink. And I had seen it slip out, though my consciousness, concentrated on my eager thirst, had not noticed it. During sleep my subconscious merely brought the picture back.

## THE HON. STEPHEN COLERIDGE.

Fifty years ago, in the winter of 1882, I visited Bristol and dined with a Dr. Harrison, who then occupied a beautiful old Georgian house.

He was very old, and moved into his dining-room in a wheeled chair, and we remained there when the meal was over. In the dimly-lighted room in which we were left alone, he began to speak of dreams, and very vividly do I remember his account

Photo: Howard Coster.

*Mr Algernon Blackwood*

of one that came to his knowledge many years before, when the celebrated Mrs. Fry was alive and living in Bristol. He was on intimate terms with her, and in those distant days a prosperous trade was carried on between Bristol and Jamaica before the days of steamers.

One day Mrs. Fry sent for him and told him that two nieces of hers, who were twins and whose parents were in Jamaica, were at school up in Clifton, and that Mary, one of them, was reported to be ill, and Mrs. Fry wished him to go to the school and examine her. He did so at once and, finding the girl in an advanced stage of consumption, advised that she should be shipped off forthwith to her parents, as it was possible that the sea voyage and the change of climate might be very beneficial to her. Mary was accordingly sent to her parents forthwith.

About seven or eight weeks later Mrs. Fry sent for him again on hearing that Mabel, the twin sister, was now also very ill. Again he visited the school, and to his consternation found the girl in a very far advanced condition of the same disease.

This time he advised that the girl should be moved down to Mrs. Fry's house, where he could the better attend to her. She was too ill for any suggestion of following her sister to Jamaica, and, in fact, nothing he

could do could save her, and in a very short time she died.

So swift was her collapse that Dr. Harrison felt uneasy and obtained permission to perform a post-mortem examination, which, however, only confirmed his diagnosis of rapid consumption, with no other cause of death.

Photo: Hughes.

*Mr. Warwick Deeping*

Contrary to his usual custom in such cases, he covered over the opening he had made in the girl's body with a plaster. On the 11th of October, the day before the funeral of the girl, he visited Mrs. Fry, who immediately told him of a strange dream she had experienced that morning.

'I was reading the word of promise,' she said (being a Quaker she thus spoke of the Bible), 'and I suppose I must have slept, for I saw Mary come into the room, at which, in astonishment, I asked her why she had come to me, and received the reply that she had come over from Jamaica, and had just seen her sister Mabel in a box with a plaster upon her, and with that she went out as she had come.'

Dr. Harrison was quite certain that no one could have informed Mrs. Fry of his reverent act in covering the results of his post-mortem as he had done, and he entered an account of Mrs. Fry's dream in his medical diary.

Some weeks passed, and he received a summons from Mrs. Fry, and, on calling upon her, she showed him a letter, just received, from the parents of the twins in Jamaica. This letter recorded that Mary had so much benefited by the sea voyage and the change of climate as to be fairly on the way to complete recovery, but a strange thing had happened to her on October 11th, when she fell suddenly into a kind of trance, from which she soon recovered without apparently any evil results, but that nothing would persuade her but that she had been to Bristol, and had seen her sister Mabel in a box with a plaster upon her.

This letter Dr. Harrison had preserved and interleaved in his diary.

He offered no explanation of these remarkable occurrences beyond surmising that there may sometimes exist between twins, however distant from each other, a kind of sweet accord that apprises one of any evil overtaking the other.

But this left Mrs. Fry's dream quite unexplained, and there it remained in his opinion entirely inexplicable.

From a Painting.

*Mrs. H. O. Arnold-Forster.*

### WARWICK DEEPING.

I have on one occasion dreamed a short story and got up at five in the morning to write down the details It was quite a good short story, and quite strange to any experience I had ever had

Not long ago I caught my subconscious—or whatever it is—making suggestions in a dream with regard to a book I was writing. They were absurd suggestions—and I was conscious of saying, Shut up!" The book had shaped itself out already

Mostly, my dreams are about houses and gardens and landscapes, all in detail, but quite strange to me Often I am planning how to treat the garden or decorate the house.

### MRS. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER.

(Author of "Studies in Dreams")

Numerous instances have been recorded of super-dreams in which the dream mind has actually solved problems that have defeated efforts of the normal mind in its waking hours. Henri Fabre said that in sleep he was occasionally able to solve mathematical problems with which he had struggled all day and Condorcet had revealed to him the solution of a particularly difficult problem in similar manner My father, Nevil Story-Maskelyne, had a very similar

From a Drawing by Sir Bernard Partridge

*The Hon. Stephen Coleridge.*

Photo Ray Daniels

*Miss Storm Jameson.*

experience. While he was engaged on a treatise on crystallography he was confronted with a mathematical problem, the solution of which completely baffled him in spite of many hours of hard work. He fell into a deep sleep, and in the course of a long dream the answer to the problem came to him. He often described this to me and told me how in an early hour of the morning he awoke and wrote down the solution that the dream had given him, and anxiously tested its correctness.

### STEPHEN GRAHAM.

During the years in which my passport to Russia was repeatedly refused I formed a project of entering Russia secretly via the Persian frontier. I then became subject to a vivid nightmare which has visited me at least six times. In this dream I was passportless in Moscow and being chased by the agents of the G.P.U. I know Moscow well and I seemed to have forgotten nothing. Every street and cross-street and tramline was familiar. Always I was congratulating myself on my special knowledge, and yet at every turn I was in danger. I think this warning dream provides one of the reasons why I never realized the foolish project of visiting the country without a visé.

### STORM JAMESON.

Towards the end of 1924 I had to make a decision which would affect my whole life and future happiness. It was one of extraordinary difficulty and I thought about and round it for more than a month, without being able to make up my mind. I was distracted with anxiety, could not work or concentrate on any of the ordinary business of my life.

At last, in something like despair, I did make up my mind. The course I chose involved making a great many preparations of one sort and another, and while I was arranging these my feeling of unhappiness grew. Yet I could not see any possibility of coming to any other decision.

One evening I left London and went down to stay the night in a house near a weir

The sound of the water had a curiously soothing effect on my mind, and for the first time for many weeks I fell asleep as soon as I lay down. I had a dream which began and ended with the sound of the weir. In between I thought that I was hurrying through streets towards a house where I was expected. I reached the house, a big, dark-looking place, and went in. I had expected servants, but there were none, and I went upstairs and along a passage to a door which opened into the first of a series of rooms. The doors of all the rooms were

Photo: Vaughan & Freeman.

*Mr. Stephen Graham.*

open, and I went from one to the other. There was a garden to the right of the rooms, filled with enormous white flowers, and some of the rooms had French windows that opened into the garden. I felt rested and happy. Then I began to wonder why, since I had come upstairs to it, there was a garden just there. I heard my own voice say happily: "But, of course, this is the *other* side of the house."

I seemed to wake up very slowly, so slowly that for a moment I was conscious at the same time of the dream-rooms with the flowers outside the windows and of the noise of the weir. Another moment and I was not only fully awake but had taken a fresh decision which changed and amplified everything. All that I must do unrolled in my mind in vivid detail, like a pattern I had only to follow.

It seemed impossible that I had not seen this way out of my troubles before. Yet for weeks I had explored, as I thought, every likely and unlikely avenue. Now too I felt confident. I *knew* that this was the right and proper course to take. What I had to do was not easy: not any easier than my previous mistaken course, yet I was happy. Moreover, I know now that this dream decision—reached at the very last possible moment (in another two days it would have been too late to alter anything)—was not only entirely right but more fortunate even than it appeared at the time.

### C. R. W. NEVINSON, R.B.A., R.O.I.

When I am conscious I disbelieve absolutely in all the supernatural, I am not a Christian, and I do not believe in the life after death, having been near death more often than many mortals, I have reason to believe it is one long eternal sleep. Man's egotism probably dislikes this outlook, as each individual, from egotism is inclined to believe a person so important as himself survives and survives, and every action of his will at least receive reward in the future, and that his neighbours will receive their due for behaving as they did towards him on this earth. My main sympathy with Christianity is that originally it cleared the dark minds of Greece and Rome of omens, portents, and all the terrors of superstition.

But but, but, I admit that as soon as I fall into unconscious or semi-conscious condition I am often the victim of the strangest manifestations, the host of several of the dead, the onlooker of occurrences in far distant countries, and the recipient of prophetic visions that deal with the affairs of man.

Professor Sir Michael Sadler has written some time ago pointing out the strange prophetic condition of young painters immediately before the War. Wyndham Lewis exhibited a picture at the Allied Artists Club in 1913, entitled Plan of War, which depicted trench warfare and aerial photography some time before it became a grim fact.

It is generally known that my Futuristic pictures immediately preceding the War, were definitely prophetic. My dreams are generally of such an intensity and particular reality that, as I get older, I find increasing difficulty in distinguishing between my waking and sleeping conditions, so that often reality veers on hallucination, and my hallucinations upon reality, and when I am concentrating hard upon my painting I fall into a condition in which I seem guided by a power

Maple Douglas

*Mr C. R. W. Nevinson.*

or subconsciousness which is above or beyond reality, often completing a picture which I had no original intention of painting. Often I dislike the pictures, but I generally exhibit them now, because I find these particular pictures seem to have some power of creating a sympathy, or animosity, which is almost uncanny. This is a magnetism which is to me quite inexplicable by the ordinary rules of aesthetics, technique, composition or even subject matter. As I get older and become more confused as to the reason for man's existence and still more bewildered by man's desire to express himself, or his attempts to discover the answer to "what is art" in any or all of its manifestations, I become more convinced that there is some force of which humanity has, as yet, no knowledge, which is either subconscious or supernatural, which is the cause of this urge, and the dream condition is the state of mind most necessary for the production of a great work of art, and which makes all art criticism and all human endeavour to explain taste or the appeal of a masterpiece so much waste paper.

MORLEY ROBERTS.

Although this dream, which happened to me in early manhood, had no recognizable influence on my own future, it may have a value to others. It has been suggested that it was due to reading Dante, but my own feeling is that it arose from those natural moral conflicts which are apt to continue until we have made a reasonable compromise between early rigid moral teaching and our own instincts.

I found myself climbing in utter darkness up an endless series of shallow steps perpetually turning clockwise to the right, and I was aware, I know not how, that these stairs extended from an infinity below me to an infinity above. Very gradually the darkness lightened faintly, and I saw that these spiral stairs wound about a central hollow well which was so wide that it was not easy to discern the farther side. And as the darkness was faintly dissipated I heard sounds as of distant wailing which became more and more distinct when I recognized that the sound, and the very light itself, came from floating figures of dim white ghosts which moved upwards on one side of the vast well and downwards on the other as on dividing winds. And still I climbed and climbed for so vast a period of time that it seemed to me that I had been on that staircase leading I knew not where, for ever and for ever, and that I should be climbing there for all eternity. This long ordeal, utterly painful and distressing as it seemed, was made more terrible by some sensation in me which told me that this well and staircase made the only open space in a universe wholly of adamant. For the stairs and walls were adamant, smooth and black. It is hard to express any sense of the passage of time in a state where time, as human beings know it, did not exist, but though I grew weary I had no other impulse than to continue upward, still strangely oppressed by the ceaseless wailing of the spirit forms which floated past me. For I knew that these would never cease from pain or crying. Thus all the world,

Photo Elliott & Fry

*Mr. Morley Roberts*

or those sensible in it, were destined to endless pain I made no reflection, but these things I knew, and after aeons of climbing I also knew that I was all alone. Let me here put, as it were, a sign of a hiatus in memory.

For of a sudden I found on the stair some creature resembling a childish-imagined imp of hell, who rose as I came to him and offered me an unlighted torch. I took it, and instantly it burst into so brilliant a flame that it put out the dim light coming from the gloating figures, though I still heard the sounds of their rave. And in the light I was strangely exalted and sprang up the stairs eagerly and so came to a great square aperture in the adamantine wall into which I ran joyfully. And as I entered my torch was extinguished, while from the very substance of the walls within which I found myself there came a brilliant light by which I saw that I was in a mighty chamber shaped like a coffin. At the head of this coffin was a black slab such as might be there as a pillow for the dead. I ran swiftly and came to this slab and sprang upon it, and then saw that the end of the coffin was a mirror of steel in which my own figure, clothed strangely in something resembling the traditional Mephistophelian garb, was clearly reflected. I was mightily pleased and utterly glad, for in my eyes I saw that I had become wholly evil, a state which being perfected, as it were, was infinitely desirable. For now at last all struggle had ceased and I was free. For if being wholly good was liberty, so being wholly evil was liberty also. And I cried out and sprang off the slab and ran out of this coffin-tomb laughing. As I did so the light within it died suddenly and again I saw the figures on the divided winds of the well and heard their eternal grief. And I began again the ascent of the stairs.

I offer no comments. I have put down exactly what I dreamed with one exception, the omission of one of those irrelevant and absurd minor details so frequent in dreams.

# MUSICAL MIRANDA

Her full name was Miranda Marchmont, and she was twenty-one or thereabouts—well, certainly not more than twenty-two—and rather tall and slight. Also she had fair hair with a natural wave in it, blue eyes with rather long lashes, and a particularly satisfactory nose.

And again one might say that her ankles were distinctly good ankles, and that her movements were graceful rather than otherwise. And since in addition to all these attractions she had a smile—and a laugh, too, quite frequently—which communicated a good deal of pleasure to all healthy young gentlemen, she was what you might call a popular girl, and her parents often had great difficulty in using their own telephone.

For as sure as they approached it, it would ring, and as sure as they lifted its receiver, a voice would inquire "I say—can I speak to Miranda?" And at first her parents had retorted "Who shall I say it is?" But after a bit they'd given this

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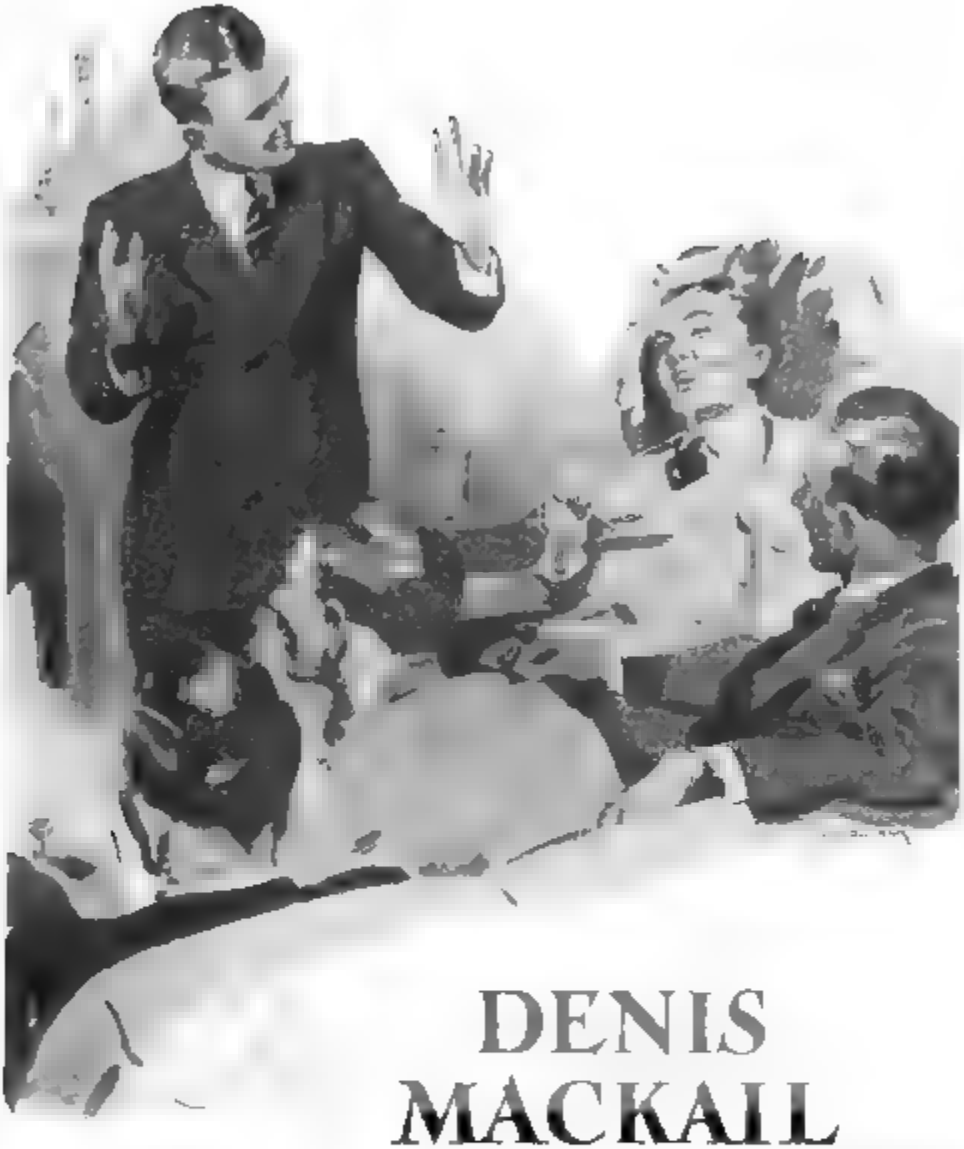


# DENIS MACKAIL

*Illustrated by* FRANK OLDHAM

up, because it added little to their knowledge, and seemed rather waste of time, and because their daughter appeared to be equally ready to speak to anyone

"Miranda!" they had now taken to shouting from the foot of the stairs. "Somebody wants you!"

And then the creature came rushing down more gracefully than otherwise and took hold of the instrument, and seemed instantly to recognize the voice as that of Peter or Jimmy or Harold or Billy or Roderick. And shortly afterwards she was saying "Oh, thanks awfully. I'd love to." And then she looked over her shoulder and said "Oh, by the way, I'll be out to lunch," or "Oh, by the

way I shan't be in for dinner." And that, in these go-ahead times, was really about all that her parents knew in regard to these voices on their telephone.

Reference to other parents, however, suggested that all this was perfectly normal, and they only had to look at the creature herself to feel a strange confidence that she was doing nothing that any of them would regret. Yet at the back of their minds they did sometimes look forward to a calmer future when their telephone should ring less incessantly and the result of this apparent competition should have been announced. While equally at the back of what she would probably have called her own mind Miss Murchison was aware that eventually she would let one of these young gentlemen propose to her, and that when she did this it wouldn't only be for fun.

In fact, to show you how little she intended to remain a butterfly, she had not only chosen the church in which she was to be married, but had practically selected the street in which she was to live. But she still hadn't quite decided under what name she was to adorn it, and though a number of young gentlemen were more than anxious to settle this point for her, her smile, so far—or, if necessary, her laugh—had baffled and thwarted the whole lot.

She'd lunch or dine with them, she'd dance with them, she'd go racing with them, not like Atalanta of course, but at Hurst Park or Hawthorn Hill—and once or twice she had even ascended with them into the upper air. But, so far, as soon as any one of them had developed a warning huskiness, a slight swimming of the eyes, an ominous solemnity or any other symptom of an impending declaration, she'd smile, or she'd laughen, and in any case she'd changed the subject and the threat had been withdrawn.

No need for this attractive, but competent, creature to let the poor fellow come splutter ing out with it, to register astonishment tinged with sorrow, and to offer the preposterous counter-suggestion that they should still just be friends. The young gentleman who succeeded in proposing to Miranda would win her and wouldn't be kept in more than a moment's suspense about it. She was only waiting until she had reached a definite decision in what at this stage it almost looks as though she had some justification in calling her mind.

SO this was the game that they all played, though of course the young gentlemen had to work sometimes as well—and now it would seem that Peter or Jimmy was forging ahead, and then again the betting would suddenly harden in favour of Billy or Roderick. And Harold? No, we haven't forgotten about Harold and Harold—and, if it comes to that, Nigel and Rupert and Rex—also had moments of hope, and then on the point of turning all hoarse and serious found that something had slipped up and that the *status* was remarkably quo. Very good for them, no doubt, poor lads, and quite interesting, of course, for thus gave Miranda. For, of course, she was going to settle it all, quite soon. In fact, the very moment that she was really certain.

At the hour which is called the cocktail hour—but Miranda herself neither smoked, nor drank anything but water—her friends including her admirers, were in the habit of assembling in her parents' drawing-room—from which her parents obligingly and gladly withdrew—where they chattered and played the gramophone. The guests, or at any rate the young gentlemen, would arrive bearing new records—much as their ancestors had arrived with bouquets, or their still earlier ancestors might have turned up with beads or feathers—which they offered to their hostess, and their hostess accepted and proceeded to play.

And sometimes she showed so much enthusiasm when a new blues or rumba happened to catch her fancy that even the donor would feel a spasm of jealousy for it. Yet sometimes, though the air was no less rudimentary or bothering, a remote look or a slight frown would cross her face. The tunes reeked of sentiment, but was this the kind of sentiment that she really wanted? Wasn't there something different, steadier, solider, more lasting, that this music seemed to lack?

She glanced at her admirers, and they were amusing, of course, and she liked them, but she knew she didn't love them. Yet if all young gentlemen were like this—and so far there seemed little evidence to the contrary—why was she waiting, and why didn't she let them propose to her, and why didn't she get it over?

And then came reaction, and she laughed spontaneously, and displayed so much pleasure and appreciation at the new tune that no one would have thought for a moment that she cared for anything else. And perhaps she didn't now. After all, there was nothing like dance-music. Her brow cleared.

"Let's have it again," she said, and they had it again, and lots more just like it, until the party broke up because it was time for them all to dress. This was the kind of life that Miranda led at this stage, and except for these fleeting moments she thoroughly enjoyed it, and had no immediate intention of leading any other.

But Destiny or Providence disposes. Coming back from tea with her former

*Miranda bit her lip, and said, "Of course I'm sorry. But I didn't do it on purpose."*

governess in Pimlico, it chanced—and not exactly for the first time in modern traffic conditions—that Miss Murchison was a little late in applying her brakes, or that her father's chauffeur had been a little lax in adjusting them, and that she drove her bumpers into another motorist's luggage-grid.

Nothing much in that, you say. It was happening all over London, and except where peculiarly passionate persons were involved—or where a fixed-point policeman observed the occurrence and provoked a number of further collisions by leaving his post and writing a short-story about it—a scowl and an apology generally ended the matter, and both motorists went on their way.

But on this occasion the owner of the luggage-grid stopped, and got out and came round. And though he didn't look at all passionate or choleric, he looked so serious that this girl Miranda decided to smile at him. Not mockingly as when young gentlemen tried to propose to her, but agreeably and charmingly, as who should say: These things will happen of course, but, there, there, it's all over and nobody's hurt.

Only instead of smiling back, or scowling, if it comes to that, the other motorist stared for a moment, and then advanced and raised his hat.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "Did you say something?"

"No," said Miranda. "I only smiled."

"I beg your pardon," said the other motorist again, and still very seriously. "I thought for a moment—— But I must have made a mistake. I beg your pardon. I'm sure."

And he put his hat on again, and as he didn't explain—for he was shy as well as serious—that the impression to which he had referred was that several Catherine-wheels had just exploded inside him, that he had simultaneously been kicked by a metaphorical mule, and that it was all rubbish when people said you couldn't fall in love at first sight, since, as we say, he failed to report any of these phenomena or discoveries, it now struck Miranda that he was being sarcastic because she hadn't apologized.

So she bit her lip, but didn't look any plainer for doing so, and said: "Of course I'm sorry. But I didn't do it on purpose."

"Didn't you?" said the other motorist, a little vaguely. And then he shot back off his hat again and said, "No, no, of course you didn't. It was all my fault, I mean. I should have signalled, or I should have signalled differently. I say, I'm terribly afraid your bumper's a bit bent. I say, wouldn't you like my name and address? I mean, supposing there was some other damage that you only found afterwards. I say, shall I give you one of my cards?"

As he was already offering it, it seemed a little difficult to refuse it. And as he was still staring at her, it seemed that he was possibly expecting something in return.

"Do you mean," asked Miranda, "that you want my name and address too?"

"Oh, no!" said the serious-looking motorist. "At least," he said, "if I could just ring up this evening and make quite certain you're all right."

"But of course I'm all right," said Miranda. To his air of solemnity was suddenly added an air of disappointment. Well, he'd been polite enough, and though she'd never met a young gentleman quite like this before—for her friends, as you may have gathered, went in more for levity and gaiety—after all, he'd done nothing to deserve a snub.

So she said: "Well, if you really want to, I'm Miss Murchison, and we're in the telephone-book, and my father's initials are 'J. B.' But really and truly," she said, "there's nothing for you to worry about."

She then smiled again—perhaps a little more vividly because in spite of her last words the young gentleman was still looking so earnest—engaged her reverse-gear with a loud crunch, braked, wrenched at her steering-wheel, shot forward again, and so passed from the scene. Apart from glancing at the young gentleman's visiting-card, noting that he was called George Cumberbatch, and deciding—not unreasonably, though she subsequently changed her mind—that it was a pretty ridiculous sort of name to be saddled with, she gave no further thought to the incident. Nor on this particular occasion did she run into anyone else's luggage-grid until she had safely reached her parents' home.

THE gang was there, so was the gramophone, and there was the usual amount of chatter. Later she dined out, and danced with Rupert, and later still—at a critical moment—she smiled at him, and on second thoughts laughed as well. Then she came home, and went to bed, and slept. She was called. She ate a light breakfast.

"Miranda!" shouted her mother. "Somebody wants you." She raced gracefully to the telephone. "Hullo?" she said, in spite of the Controller's advice. "Yes?" she said. "Who is it?"

"George Cumberbatch," said the receiver. "I rang up last night, but you were out. So I thought," it said, "I'd better ring up again."

"Oh," said Miranda. And the voice still sounded so earnest and polite, that she added: "I'm sorry you've had so much trouble."

"Not at all," said Mr Cumberbatch. "I do hope you're none the worse."

"For what? Oh, I see what you mean. No, of course I'm none the worse."

"I was a little anxious about your bumper," said Mr Cumberbatch. "I kept thinking about it in the night."

"You needn't have," said Miranda. "I mean, it's always either being bent or straightened out."

"It's very good of you to say so," said the voice. "And by the way," it went on, in the same rather dogged tone, "I've been

making some inquiries and I think I'm correct in saying that your father was at Cambridge at about the same time as an uncle of mine.'

'Was he?' asked Miranda, feeling a little puzzled. 'Do you mean they knew each other?'

'Well, as a matter of fact' said the voice, 'I don't know that they did. But I thought I'd just mention it because I thought in that case you might think it less unconventional if I asked if I might call on you.'

'Call on me?' said Miranda. None of her friends ever called on her. They just came, or they turned up, or they barged in—in certain cases—they trickled along. But this strange young man not only went about with a supply of visiting-cards, but also seemed to imagine that she couldn't tell a gentleman from the opposite at sight.

How absurd! And yet rather touching, you know. Or a change anyhow. 'But of course,' she found herself saying, 'just ring up and say when you're coming. I'm nearly always in about six or soon after.'

'Thank you,' said the voice, 'very much indeed.' And then it rang off, and Miranda raced just as gracefully upstairs again, and then she rather forgot about it, except once or twice when she smiled at some vague thought which she scarcely troubled to analyse. Her cheerful admirers continued to buzz round her, and she was kept pretty busy, in a sense, accepting their invitations and checking their tendency to turn husky or pop-eyed. 'Not yet,' was the only decision that she had really reached. 'No, I don't think I feel at all certain about any of them yet.'

So, as usual, there were several young gentlemen, as well as several young ladies, talking and listening to Miss Murchison's gramophone when, a few years later, the parlourmaid opened the door and announced Mr Cumberbatch. And Miranda remembered him almost at once and scrambled to her feet, and tossed her hair off her forehead and held out her hand, and said 'Hullo! Come along!'

Mr Cumberbatch seemed a little taken aback by this cordial scene, but he rallied as he gripped his hostess's fingers. 'You got my message?' he asked.

'Rather!' said Miranda, not altogether truthfully, because she hadn't really had time so far to look at any of the messages on the hall-table—and, after all, if there were ever anything really important, people generally rang up again. But of course, this made no difference now he was here, and she introduced him compendiously and told him to sit down, and offered him some refreshment.

'No, thank you,' said the serious visitor. And some of the other young gentlemen stared at him, and Miranda felt a little defensive and protective—for why should anyone have refreshment if they didn't want it?—and asked him if he knew a tune called *I Like Your Face*.

'Well, no,' said the serious visitor. 'I'm afraid I don't.'

'I'll play it for you, then,' said Miranda. And she played it for him—and for herself, and for all the others as well—and as usual this produced a pretty general outbreak of conversation, so that even if George Cumberbatch had been more musical he might have had some difficulty in identifying the air. And the concert proceeded, and so did the conversation, and George Cumberbatch sat looking attentive and solid, and sometimes it seemed to Miranda that no one had any business to come here and be so quiet, and then again it crossed her mind to compare him with some of the others, and in this light the comparison wasn't entirely in their favour.

'They're more amusing,' she thought, 'but then does one want to be amused all the time? They're awfully nice,' she thought, 'but then they're all terribly like each other.'

And then suddenly she went and sat down by Mr Cumberbatch, and as she never hesitated to ask questions, and as he had nothing to hide from her—except in the present circumstances, the fact that he was madly in love with her—it wasn't long before she'd learnt that he was twenty-five, and that he was in the City, and that he lived alone in a flat near the scene of their former meeting, and that he hadn't got any relations—even his uncle who'd been at Cambridge it seemed, had taken his educational advantages elsewhere—and that he never went to dances.

'What, never?' asked Miranda, at this point. 'But how extraordinary!' she said, coming a little closer because her gramophone was now playing a very loud Comedy Six-Eight. 'Why not?' she asked.

'I can't dance,' said George Cumberbatch.

'Good heavens!' said Miranda. And she got up suddenly and left him—not, as he had feared, because she was revolted by this incapacity, but because she was so astonished that it was just as if someone had run a pin into her. And yet she was thinking almost at the next moment, why should one dance if one didn't want to? It passed the time at a certain age, it was good exercise in a way—though it would be better

exercise if the air were generally less foul—but you couldn't say that it was an accomplishment of real significance or import.

Again she glanced at the young gentleman whom she'd just left. He looked healthy enough. His face was rather a nice brown, and he was anything but a weakling. And he was quiet, but you couldn't call him dull. In a sense, in fact—that's to say, in a sense specially recognized by Miranda—he was rather a lamb.

And perhaps she'd been rather rude to him just now, and she was just about to return and ask him some more questions, when another young gentleman—it was Rex, as it happened—caught her by the elbow.

"Come on!" he said.

"Come on where?"

"Dance," said Rex, and transferred his grip to her waist, and began shuffling skilfully over the parquet to the strains of another but less boisterous record. Miss Murchison relaxed. It's rather fun, of course, she thought. She stiffened. There'd been a husky note in her partner's voice, and purposeful look in his extremely adjacent eye. She smiled, she laughed, she pushed him aside. "I'm sorry," she said. "I've only just realized the time. I must fly and dress. I've got to dine out."

"But I thought——" began Rex.

"No, I made a mistake, Rex. I'm sorry. Some other night. And now you must all go, or I'll be late." And "Good-bye, Mr Cumberbatch," said Miranda. "I'll see you again, perhaps, shall I?"

"I hope so," said George. "When?"

When? Well, really, thought Miranda, that wasn't what people generally said. The normal answer, in her experience, should have been "Yes, rather, when will you come out with me?" She looked surprised. She bit her lip again. And yet, she thought, it argued a certain steadiness and a certain diffidence which weren't altogether unpleasing. "Well," she said, with a smile, "you know when I'm here; don't you? Just ring up, and come along."

"Thank you," said George. And off he went. And off they all went. And for the first time for some weeks Miranda dined at home that night—for again it seemed that she hadn't been altogether truthful when she'd told Rex that she was dining out. Why not? She wasn't quite sure, except that it had just come over her that sometimes Rex and the others were just a little unnecessarily restless and vivacious. Sometimes one didn't want that kind of thing, she thought. After all, it was rather nice sometimes, just to be quiet.

So she spent a domestic evening alone with her parents, who were delighted to see her for a change, though in the course of it they each separately asked her if she were feeling quite well.

"Of course I am!" she said. "One doesn't always want to go out, does one?"

They thought something was up. They were right, too, though they didn't know what it was, and Miranda didn't know what it was, and only George Cumberbatch sitting by himself in his flat, quite definately recognized his own symptoms.

'BUT, of course,' thought George Cumberbatch to himself—and we hope you observe how already even you are getting quite used to his name—'of course, I'm the last sort of fellow she'd ever care for. I'm not lively enough. I don't go about nearly enough. Why, I'd never even heard of that tune—what was it called? "I Like Your Face." And I suppose I should have."

Why? One appreciates his humility, but one can't see that he was the worse for his ignorance of the kind of tune which is born, played to death, and forgotten in six weeks. Nevertheless, this was how it struck George Cumberbatch in his bachelor apartment, and whether it were reasonable or merely ridiculous, his ignorance—or rather the gulf between Miss Murchison and himself which it implied—stalked him so acutely in the morning that he took a step which he had never dreamt of taking before in his life.

Leaving his flat even earlier than was his custom, he called at the nearest dealer in such instruments and ordered and paid for a gramophone of the latest pattern and a dozen of the newest and most popular dance-records. By this ingenious or possibly preposterous method it seemed to him that the gulf might be narrowed, and that in a short time he might not only learn to distinguish one tune from another, but also to discuss them in a manner calculated to make a favourable impression on the object of his affections.

What a fool, and what a hope. He'd made his favourable impression already, and he'd made it largely by the contrast which he offered to Rex and the rest of them. Moreover, if jungle-rhythm means nothing in your life, and you also happen to be practically tone-deaf, what's the use of playing twelve records over and over again, unless, of course, it is your desire to exasperate the occupants of all the adjoining flats?

In this last and unintentional purpose George Cumberbatch met with immense and almost unexampled triumph. But in his original object he made no ascertainable progress whatsoever, and when he called, as he continued calling, doggedly and

*All his fears and terrors and scruples were swept aside. Even if Miranda had been watching his expression she could hardly have guessed what was coming.*

frequently—on Miss Murchison in her parents' drawing-room he was so much obsessed by his failure that he scarcely noticed the very obvious signs of his success

If she came and sat by him he thought she was just being kind If she looked at him while talking or dancing with the others, he was convinced that she was making fun of him under cover of the general rumpus. He went on going there because he couldn't keep away But he never saw her alone because he never asked to see her alone, and he never invited her to come out with him because he wasn't aware that you could do a thing like that unless you had a sister or a cousin to safeguard the proprieties

IT never occurred to him that the absence of these characters was by no means one of the weakest points in his favour or that by this time it wouldn't have counted against him if he had seven sisters and a whole cohort of cousins And you see or we hope you see, the curious situation in which the girl Miranda now found herself Infatuated—there's no other word for it—by the one young gentleman of her acquaintance whose advances she wasn't constantly resisting and baffled—again, there's no other word for it—by the one young gentleman whose seriousness didn't apparently mean that he was about to propose

But, of course, she couldn't take on this task herself it's been done, but never by girls like Miranda—and so, on the verge of frenzy, she came to the point where she said "Well here goes. I don't care what happens!" And suddenly she was so nice to Nigel—though it might equally have been any of the others—that his heart leapt up, and his eyes began to bulge, and his voice deepened and thickened, and on the floor of a very smart supper-club, he said "I say—Miranda!"

And she said "Yes, Nigel?" And looked up at him

And he said "I say—look here, Miranda

And suddenly she completely changed her mind, and was miserable and angry with herself and smiled and began to laugh

Here!" said Nigel. What's the matter?"

"I love this tune" she said and she began humming it and thinking of George Cumberbatch And just you try proposing to a girl when she's humming and thinking of someone else let alone when she's smiling and laughing at you. It can't be done, and Nigel couldn't do it, and she went on humming, and she hummed in the taxi going home, and she hummed going to bed

And was that all? No. A gentleman might be on her mind, but this tune—as the saying goes—was now on her brain And a few moments after she woke in the morning it returned to torment her, and to remind her not of Nigel, with whom she had heard it, but of George Cumberbatch with whom it seemed far more closely associated

"I must get it at once," she thought meaning that she must instantly purchase it on a composition disc, and the fact that she didn't know what it was called was nothing because aren't dealers in these goods perfectly accustomed to their clients coming into their shops and singing to them as the only means of identifying their requirements? Well of course it's one of the commonest occurrences in their monotonous lives

So she rose, and hurried through her light breakfast and dashed out into the street and sped towards the nearest agent for such merchandise—for if she couldn't get what she wanted most in the world then this was all the more reason for showing diligence in seeking what she could get And what could be more natural than that George Cumberbatch—as he had done for weeks past—should have fetched a circuit on the way to his office that might bring him near her home?

You see what happened? They met Quite suddenly at the corner of a street and they both said Oh! and they both reddened, and George hoped that she wouldn't ask him what he was doing here but all that Miranda thought was how marvellous to be seeing him at all

And he said "You're early, aren't you?

And she said "Yes. I'm going to buy a record

And he said There's a shop I've just passed Were you going there? Would it matter if I came with you?"

Matter? Of course not It wasn't exactly an invitation, but it was the nearest resemblance to one which he'd offered her yet He turned round, and they walked side by side This'll be over in a moment" they were both thinking And then they were both in the shop

An assistant came forward and though normally a little surly at this hour in the morning he was instantly fascinated by Miss Murchison's appearance

Yes, madam?" he said.

I want a dance-record," said Miranda, and I don't know the name, but it goes like——"

She stopped abruptly In the shock and joy of meeting Mr Cumberbatch it appeared that the haunting melody had gone clean out of her head

Yes, miss?" said the assistant

"Oh, dear!" said his lovely customer. "I've forgotten it again. But, perhaps," she said, "if I could hear some of the new ones——"

"Certainly," said the assistant, who was well used to this also. He retired to collect a supply of samples, and George Cumberbatch said something that he certainly wouldn't have said a month ago.

"I know some titles," he said—and indeed, these were all that his intensive course of home-study had taught him. "I suppose it isn't called 'Stick 'Em Up, Baby'?"

"No, no," said Miranda. "I've got that."

"Or 'Whining'? Or 'My Cutie's a Beauty'?"

"No, no," said Miranda, who hardly seemed to appreciate the change in him. "I've got both those. I'm sick of them."

So was George. He noted it as the nearest approach to a real link which he had yet discovered, and proceeded doggedly but unavailingly with the rest of his list. It got neither of them anywhere, and still the assistant kept starting records, and then taking them off again, as they failed to satisfy his remarkably attractive client.

"Well, miss," he was saying presently, "unless it's in the mid-month lot, and I don't know as they've come in yet——"

AND then, you see, he retired once more into some inner recess, and Miranda looked at a bust of Beethoven and thought: "What am I waiting for? I don't want that tune any longer, and I can't get anything else." And George looked at Miranda again, and "Gosh!" he thought, "how sweet she is, and how exquisite, and how adorable!" And he was alone with her, for the moment and in a sense, and when, he wondered desperately, could he ever hope to be alone with her again? Of course, he'd no chance. Yet his eyes began to protrude. The upper part of his thorax became extremely congested.

"Now!" he thought suddenly—or didn't so much think it as let something sweep all his fears and terrors and scruples aside. Even if Miranda had been watching his earnest expression she could hardly have guessed what was coming. But it came.

"Listen!" he said, huskily. "Miranda!" he said, daringly. "I know this is a bit sudden," he said, "but it's felt like years to me, and I can't stand it any longer, and if you won't——" He tried to clear his throat, and his hoarseness developed into an almost alarming boom. "I adore you!" he announced. "I absolutely——"

"Oh!" gasped Miss Murchison, more or less overwhelmed by surprise and a number of unprecedented physical sensations.

"Ah!" said the assistant from behind his curtain. "Here it is, sir," he said, bursting out with a disc in his hand. "In the new lot that came last night. 'I Adore You,'" he said, triumphantly. "But, of course, sir, if only you'd said so before——"

Both visitors jumped as if they'd been stung as he planked the record on the turntable, and swung over the tone-arm, and switched on the motor. But it was the tune all right—not that it mattered now—and, of course, thought Miranda, she'd buy it, and, of course, thought George, he'd give it her, because she'd nodded at him and she'd smiled at him, and now she was actually laughing at him.

The same treatment, you will observe, that she had accorded other young gentlemen who had tried to propose to her. But this young gentleman had succeeded, and what fun they were going to have—ever afterwards, too—as soon as they got out of that shop!

# THE MAN ON

## By H.H.

IT was the last week in November. We were sitting, the six of us, round Joe Torrance's dinner-table in Wimpole Street, and I had supposed it was Chiltern—I am not quite so sure now—who was responsible for the argument that had grown up between us. Like all Joe's parties, it had been purely fortuitous, the result of chance meetings during the day. But Lady Torrance, who was the only woman present, had accepted and provided for us with her usual kindness.

Being an assistant physician on the staff of St. Julian's, where old Joe was the senior surgeon, I was, of course, as familiar with his apple-cheeked face as with the street in which he lived, and only the week before I had enjoyed the dubious privilege of being cross-examined by Chiltern for nearly an hour. I don't think he had seriously shaken my evidence—I had been one of the medical witnesses for the defence—but it was certainly pleasanter, I reflected, to be sitting opposite to him at dinner than measuring swords with him at the Old Bailey. In the mellow light, indeed, and unframed by a K.C.'s wig, his sardonic countenance was almost urbane; and it was difficult to believe that he was the same man who had so acidly tried to discredit me before the jury.

Of the other two guests I knew nothing except what I had learned during the evening. Wentworth, who was sitting next me and had apologized for not changing, was a second cousin, it appeared, of Lady Torrance. He was a hard-bitten, middle-aged man, who looked more like a sailor than an engineer, but was actually in charge of a railway in Bolivia that was being built by the Gordan Barran firm of Sheffield. Altogether he had been out there, he had told us, for seven years, and was returning that night *via* Southampton, having taken the day off, he said, to get washed and brushed while his party and plant wallowed round from Tilbury. He was also interested in birds, and, according to old Joe, a well-known authority and collector.

As for Darenth, who was sitting next Chiltern, he was a dark-eyed young man with an olive complexion and the puckered scar of a gun-shot wound seaming his left cheek just below the bone. He was something ornamental—again according to Joe—at the embassy at Paris, and a son of the man from whom Joe and Chiltern rented a mile of the Test. Joe had produced a box

# BEN NA GARVE BASHFORD

*Illustrated by R. M. CHANDLER*

of cigars, the gift, he explained, of a grateful patient.

"Well, you can't wonder," he was saying. "Every Englishman's brought up to regard tale-bearing as a low-down trick."

"And yet I suppose," said Durenth, "that fewer people get away with crime in England than in most places you could name."

"Possibly that's true," said Chiltern. "But then, by and large, we're a law-abiding nation."

"Cuts both ways, too," said Wentworth, "this difficulty in getting witnesses to come forward. Teaches the fellows on the job how to do it. And, after all, it's their job, not other people's."

"Well, I know this," said Joe. "I'd rather live in a country where the bias was against coming forward than for it."

Chiltern grinned.

"That's because you're essentially lazy."

"Tolerant," said Joe.

"Won't be bothered," said Chiltern.

"In fact, English," said Lady Torrance. "Well, I'll leave you to your coffee."

She glanced at Wentworth.

"I've ordered the car for ten o'clock, but, of course, I'll be seeing you before you go."

She patted the sparse grey hairs on her husband's head and closed the door behind her.

CHILTERN helped himself to a cigar and looked across at me.

"Take that case, for instance," he said, "we were in last week. Your people won. But they wouldn't have had an earthly if that grocer round the corner hadn't kept his mouth shut."

"So I heard tell," I said.

"And it means that a murderer has got off."

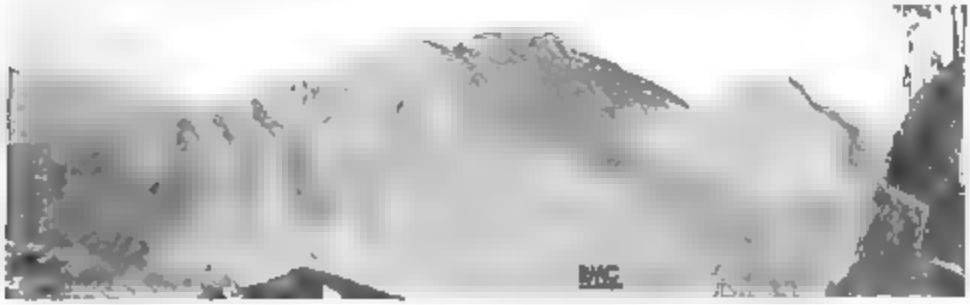
"But you can't be certain of that," said Joe, "surely."

"Not absolutely of course. But it illustrates my point."

He lit his cigar.

"And you have to remember," he added, "that for every case that comes into court there are probably a dozen that the police daren't bring there—to say nothing of the other dozen that they haven't a chance to look into because somebody or other has lain low."

"Then you consider," said Wentworth, "that if anybody happens to see something that may possibly have a—well, a criminal



*"I saw a fellow with a rucksack coming down the shoulder of the hill. He waved to the man fishing at the salmon pool. The fisherman stared at him for a moment and then waved back."*

significance, it's his duty to tell the police?"

"It's civic duty," said Chiltern certainly. Of course, it depends. Everything depends."

Wentworth lit his own cigar.

"You mean," he said slowly, "on the degree of the possibility? Well, if you'd be so kind, I should like to give you an instance. It was something that happened to me last year in Scotland."

He glanced at his watch.

"I was in much the same position," he said, "as I am at this moment. It was the last day of my leave, or rather the last day but two, and I was at Invercorrig in Rossshire. I daresay you know it. It's on the edge of the Strath Forest. But if you don't, it's not much more than a fishing inn. Six beds and three miles of the Corrig—not a bad place if you don't want a Ritz."

He finished his coffee and helped himself to another half-inch of Joe's ninety-year-old brandy.

"Well, I had had a bit of fishing," he said, "not much good—weather too bright and the water too low—and on this particular day, the sixth of June it was, I decided to go out and have a look at the hills. It was a good day, with an early mist and the sort of mountain smell that you only get in Scotland—and I suppose I had done about ten miles of heather and bog before I came to anchor under Ben Na Garve. I had

seen from the map that this divided me from Glen Carra—with Meallan Dearg on the other side of it; and being pretty fit, I decided to keep my sandwiches till I'd got to the top of the mountain. That meant another thousand feet of fairly hard going, and when I got there, I might have been the only man in the world, and I'm not going to tell you that it was the finest view in Scotland, because I change my mind about that every time I go there. Anyway it was good enough, with the Carra below me—one of the little rivers that run into Loch Bhuim—and the shoulder of Meallan Dearg across the way, and half-a-dozen other mountains beyond it. Altogether I was feeling pretty pleased with myself, especially as I had come upon a pair of red-throated divers nesting on the edge of a small tarn, and after eating my sandwiches I curled myself up under a warm bit of granite and went to sleep.

"I must have slept for a couple of hours, for when I woke up it was four o'clock—three o'clock by Nature's time—and the glen was so still that I might have been staring at a picture. I hadn't seen a soul, of course, since I left Invercorrig, but now there wasn't a sign of a movement anywhere, not a cloud or a breath of wind, and I was far too high up to see the movement of the river

'Well, I lit a pipe and was pondering turning back on my tracks, when I saw a speck of darkness detach itself from the horizon and getting my glasses on to it. I followed it across the face of Mealian Dearg and across the glen to somewhere below me. Then I saw another coming up the glen high above the river from the direction of the loch and—well, to cut it short, they were a pair of golden eagles—and that was quite enough to make me change my plans. I didn't know the country. But I had any amount of daylight—I had been fishing the night before till after eleven—and if there was an eyrie about, as I hoped and suspected, I meant to have a look at it, if it was at all possible."

WENTWORTH paused and I saw his eye meet Chiltern's.

"Perhaps you're not a bird-lover," he smiled. "But there was something rather thrilling to be there alone with a couple of golden eagles on a June afternoon in the heart of the Struan Forest, and I sat there for about half an hour considering my tactics and waiting for them to cruise again and give me a lead. Just below me, for a couple of hundred feet or so, there was a steep, but not very difficult piece of rock, and below that a [illegible] of bog, with a fringe of heather and granite boulders. To the right, this seemed to pan out upon the shoulder of the mountain, but to the left it looked as if it were sloping toward the glen, and just as I had made up my mind to get down to it, the eagles appeared again over its farther edge.

'I marked the spot and waited while they hovered over the glen and then cruised westwards out of sight, and a quarter of an hour later I was down on the ledge with the crest of Ben Na Garve behind me. I now saw that I could get back towards Inverorrig without going the way I had come, and, in fact, there seemed to be traces of a sort of sheep-track or path following the ledge and crossing the shoulder of the mountain. It can't have been very frequented—the presence of the eagles showed that—and looking down over the brink of the ledge I saw that this was the roof of an immense corrie, dropping another three hundred feet to a slope of heather. It was a savage bit of rock, even in the June sunshine, with a tilt to the right towards the head of the glen, and as it was quite unclimbable, I decided to work towards the left, where the path bore away from it towards a belt of pines.

These were the first trees that I had seen all day—they were still a goodish way below me—and for the first time, as I left the ledge above me, I picked up the sound of the river below. I followed the path for about fifty yards down and then left it, working back towards the corrie, and at last found a crevice on the left side of the precipice from which I could command the whole of the corrie. It was just what I wanted. I judged I was pretty well out of sight, and having settled down between a couple of boulders I got out my glasses, and at last, to my great satisfaction, located the eyrie. It was upon the farther side of the corrie and partly hidden from me by a projecting bit of rock, but I could just see the heads of two young birds, and I felt that my trouble hadn't been wasted. I was also commanding, I found, about a mile of the glen, though the loch at the foot of it was out of sight, and this is what I am coming to—I saw a man fishing what seemed to be the highest salmon pool of the river.

'It was at the bottom of a little fall of which I couldn't see the top. But I watched him casting for a few minutes, and then—somewhere about six o'clock it was—I saw a fellow with a rucksack coming down the shoulder of Mealian Dearg. At first I could only see him through my glasses. He was waist-deep in heather, and the side of the mountain was in shadow, and it took me two or three minutes to find him again after I had had another look at the eyrie. But he was evidently coming down into the glen.

He had probably climbed over, I imagined, from the road along the north of Loch Bhuin, and ten minutes later, I saw him waving to the man at the salmon pool. The other man stared at him for a moment and then waved back, and I saw him pointing up the river. He was fishing on my bank and appeared to be signalling to his friend where he could get across the stream. Then I forgot them both as one of the parent eagles came over the sky-line beyond the corrie, and for the next few minutes I was watching him dropping down to the eyrie with a mountain leveret for the larder.

To be exact, that was at half-past six. I generally keep notes of that sort of thing for my bird diaries, and when I looked at the river again, I saw the man with the rucksack just coming down to the near edge of the pool. I saw the fisherman greet him. If I had to guess, I should say that he was a little surprised to see him, but they obviously knew one another—or so it seemed to me—and then they disappeared towards the tail of the pool. This was hidden from me, and I never saw the fisherman again. But ten minutes afterwards I saw the man with the rucksack, and after hesitating for a moment, I saw him leave the river, apparently with the intention of climbing Ben Na Garve.

'By then the first eagle was away again. But the second had returned and was

hovering over the eyrie and the fellow was within twenty yards of me, on the path I had left, before I thought about him again I didn't want to be disturbed So I didn't hail him and he went by without seeing me and it was another half-hour before I tore myself away and started back to Invercorrig. But he had spent the night there, for I saw him the next morning, starting out just as I had begun to shave and I saw from the visitors' book when I came down, that he was a Mr Smith of Leeds."

Wentworth paused again and removed his cigar ash

"I'm sorry to be so long" he said, "in coming to the point But, as I told you, this was the end of my leave, and a week later I was on the high seas. Meanwhile, however I had left behind me at Invercorrig a couple of bird books that I valued and when I discovered it I wrote to Mrs. McKenzie, the innkeeper's wife, and asked her to forward them to me The parcel arrived in due course But it was three months before I opened it and I was then fifty miles beyond railhead up the Ignacio in the heart of Bolivia The books had been sent out to me wrapped in brown paper but underneath this they had been packed in a local newspaper and my eye was caught by the account of an inquest on a Mr Croome who had been found drowned in a pool on the Carra

"I read it carefully I was pretty short of reading matter up there—and saw that the date of his death was June the 6th and the pool in which he had been found was at the head of the glen at the foot of Meal an Dearg and just under Ben Na Garve He had been staying, it appeared at a lodge on Loch Bhrin, the guest of a General Henderson and it was General Henderson himself and a ghillie who had found him there about half-past eight.

The inquest was very brief. Mr Croome had gone up the glen salmon fishing. Nobody had seen him since ten o'clock in the morning, and it seemed quite clear that he had somehow slipped and owing to his heavy waders been drowned in the pool What interested me however was the fact that he must have been the man I was looking at, and that I had therefore been the last person to see him alive—or rather the last but one

But what about the last person? That struck me as a little odd, though very possibly there was nothing in it But it had evidently been a friend of his, and it was difficult to believe that he hadn't heard of the accident and death I read the account again Being a local paper, it was important news, and the inquest had been fully reported. But there it was. Nobody had seen him since ten o'clock and the friend, who had been with him at half-past six hadn't, as you would have said, come forward

Wentworth sipped his brandy and looked again at Chiltern

"That was in October," he said, "and I was several thousand miles from England Do you think it was my duty as a citizen to have taken any steps?"

"Then you didn't?" said Chiltern

"No, I didn't After all I thought, there wasn't much to make a song about except that, after the two of them had passed out of my sight, I hadn't seen the fisherman again. In fact, I shouldn't have bothered you with the story at all if another rather odd thing hadn't happened I've discovered quite lately—in fact, only to-day that Mr Smith of Leeds wasn't the friend's real name"

He glanced at his watch

"And I'm leaving in half an hour Given this new circumstance, what would be your advice?"

"I think," said Chiltern, "that you ought to tell the police or at any rate write to them fully about all you know

Wentworth glanced at me

"And you?"

"I agree. I said with Chiltern"

He looked at old Joe

"Well," said Joe, "as you're just off I suppose that's the right thing to do But if you'd had time, I think I'd have suggested asking the fellow for an explanation

Wentworth smoked for a moment and then looked soberly at Darenth

"Well, Mr Darenth," he said, "what is the explanation?"

THERE was a little sound as Chiltern turned sharply in his chair Old Joe leaned forward an inch and dropped back Darenth's dark eyes were fixed upon Wentworth

"You must have been pretty well hidden," he said

"I was"

Darenth lit a cigarette

"Did you know that Croome was at the Foreign Office?"

Wentworth nodded

"So the newspaper said

"Well he'd been sending confidential papers for nearly a year. It was definitely established on June the 4th. They knew he was a friend of mine. In fact he was engaged to my sister So they let me tell him. I left him standing beside the pool

# THE YOUNG ARE SO HARD

## STORM JAMESON

*Illustrated by GRANT REID*

TO be rich and to lose your money overnight is doubtless a commonplace experience. Nothing tragic about it compared with the tragedy of losing a limb or two in that War of theirs. But startling. Yes, certainly startling. And what next? What do you do next?

David East slid off quickly in the direction of the club bar, moderating his pace when he began to catch up with the stiff figure of St John Kent, who had lost a leg and a hand in that War, looked thirty years older than David, and was actually sixteen. He sauntered, to give Kent time to make his painful way into the bar, and fingered the letter in his pocket. His reflection watched him from a mirror a thin dark twenty-one, upper lip lifting in a smile. It is difficult, standing well-fed well-tailored, in the bar of the Rockingham Club, to form a notion of poverty. Yesterday he had been worth a hundred thousand pounds. To-day nothing. Wrong. To-day he was worth the draft for three hundred pounds he had cashed yesterday. He pulled an envelope out of his pocket and made hasty calculations. Rent to the end of the month (two weeks) ninety pounds, Davies for three suits forty-five, month's wages to Mr and Mrs. Mapes thirteen pounds, expenses for food and drinks in the flat, say, ten pounds a week, various small bills, thirty. Two weeks to go and a hundred pounds left in his pocket. He ought to keep it there and look for a job.

He turned round on Kent, who was morosely swallowing a brandy at his elbow.

"What kind of a job do you think I could do?" he demanded.

Kent looked at him bleakly. His old-young face contracted. 'Dancing partner," he snapped.

'Seriously, sir," the boy persisted.

'Why d'you want to work?' Kent said, violently. 'You're well off, aren't you? You've got the use of all your limbs. Work! Why should you work?'

David smiled at him and sauntered away. Nice fellow really, he thought. Pity about his leg and his hand. It made him bad-tempered. It 'ud have been all the same if he'd had both of them, he thought wisely. these chaps that were through the War, they all think the young uns are no good.

He began conscientiously to run over his qualifications for a job. Perfect health, a straight back, scraps of two languages, Eton and the House, crack tennis, average golf—anything else? He frowned. Nothing. Pretty poor show. No wonder the country was going to the dogs if it was full of young men not able to do anything but amuse themselves. He left the club and strolled towards his flat. Half Moon Street, as he turned into it, was full of sunshine and an ex-soldier playing a barrel-organ. He gave the man half a crown. Mustn't do that, he thought, guiltily. Might need that half-crown.

As he opened the door of his flat he remembered that Elizabeth was coming to tea. Had Mrs. Mapes remembered? Of course she had, and remembered the strawberries, too, though he had not ordered

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*"It will be all right," David said. He sat on the edge of her chair and put his arm round her. "Don't lose your grip."*

them. He went on into his sitting-room and sat down, his head in his hands. Should he tell her now? He had known Elizabeth Randall for nineteen of his twenty-one years. When his mother died his father had taken his boy directly to Mrs. Randall, thrust him into her arms with an impatient "Look after it, please," and gone. A week later he left England. David had only seen him twice since, once at Eton, when John East hurried over from America for half a week, and the second time a year later when his father was dying. After the death he found he had been left one hundred thousand pounds, held in trust for him until he came of age. The trust had been misplaced. Less than a fortnight ago it had shot itself in a New York office, after making away with a great deal more than young David East's hundred thousand pounds. And that's that, David thought, lifting his head with the same half-childish smile that had infuriated poor Kent.

THE door opened and Elizabeth came in. She walked with the quick, angular grace of extreme youth. She had a small, pale face, wide mouth, upturned and smiling, dark, fine hair, and dark eyes. She was not very tall. Suddenly, his heart turned over in his body and he loved her. He closed his eyes and almost groaned aloud. What luck! To lose one's money and fall in love on the same day! He opened his eyes and smiled at her.

"Hullo, Eliza!"

He took her hat and brought her a cup of tea. She drank it sitting on the edge of her chair, smiling as she looked at him.

"Why didn't you go to the Holroyds' dance last night?"

"I couldn't," David said. He remembered something he had heard. It had been worrying him ever since. "How long have you known Charles Holroyd, and what is he?"

"A good dancer."

"Doesn't he do anything else for a living?"

"He's a clerk in the Foreign Office."

"Do you know them very well, the Holroyds?"

Elizabeth put her cup on the floor and said dryly: "You might as well know since you seem to be curious. Charles and I are in love."

After a moment David said: "Does his wife know?"

No. She was trying to seem defiant now.

"Would you rather I didn't talk about it?" David asked.

"You can talk about it if you like. It can't alter anything."

David looked at her. "What's going to be the end of it?"

"I don't know." She had been talking in a quiet voice, low and composed, and suddenly her composure broke. "Do you suppose I enjoy wondering when Charles is going to make up his mind?"

"What do you mean?" David asked.

"He's been married nine years, since he was twenty; he's eight years older than you are. You don't rush off and leave the person you've been married to all that time. At least, Charles's kind doesn't. He worries about her, wanting not to hurt her, and wanting not to lose the children, and to be quiet and not have a divorce and a fuss and in the papers and Harriet hurt and the children and his work broken up and spoiled, and oh, Harriet most, I suppose, and he'd have to give up everything and start again, with only a little money and feeling he's spoiled Harriet's life, feeling awful."

"Doesn't he feel he's spoiling yours?"

"That's different," Elizabeth said, quickly.

"Do you want me to say anything about him?"

"No."

David walked over to the window and looked out. It had begun to rain. He stared at the wet, shining street, and thought of what he would like to do to Charles Holroyd. "Don't look like that, please," Elizabeth said.

He turned round. "How old are you, Eliza?"

"Twenty. A year younger than you are."

"I'm sorry about this. I mean, I'm sorry if I seem stupid and unsympathetic. I'd help you if I could."

"You won't turn against me, will you, Davy? Whatever happens, you'll like me and stand up for me?"

"It will be all right," David said. He sat on the edge of her chair and put his arm round her. "Don't lose your grip."

"No. I won't."

"I've seen chaps go to pieces over an easy job through losing their grip suddenly. It only *looks* sudden, of course."

"I keep mine."

"Try to get the thing straightened out. I'm not preaching."

"I know you're not," Elizabeth said. "You're a darling, and I do like you so much. I'm sorry I bothered you with this about me."

"I'm glad you told me."

"I wanted to tell someone. I get confused thinking about it. Sometimes it seems all right and splendid, and other times I know I'm behaving badly. You'd be the same. The truth is, Davy, you and I are both of us betwixt-and-betweens. We've got the new ideas—do what you like and have what you can get and all

that—and we've got the old ideas and feelings, too, hanging up in the backs of our minds, like an old coat we shall some day take down and put on."

Neither bound nor free, David said.

Neither *safe* nor free. It's like looking-glass croquet, the rules all gone queer and the penalties uncertain. Don't let's talk about it any more. It always comes back to the same place.

Very well," David said.

They sat quietly for a time with the feeling of having reached an end. David stared out of the window with a faint, absent smile. Elizabeth had closed her eyes and was lying back in her chair looking sunken and slight. He remembered suddenly that he had lost all his money. It hardly seemed the moment to tell Elizabeth about it.

What are you doing this evening?" he said quickly. Come and have dinner with me.

I can't," Elizabeth said.

He saw from her face that she was dining with Charles Holroyd. He said nothing, and a moment later she went away, kissing him lightly on the cheek. He put his hands in his pockets and smiled at her.

AFTERWARDS, when she had gone, he sat down and thought about her. It was queer that he should have fallen in love like this, all in a moment, like tumbling down the side of a cliff. Perhaps he had always loved her and it had needed a jolt to set him know it. Well, he had had that all right. He tried to think about the money, but the thought of Elizabeth and Charles Holroyd persisted. He got up and began to walk up and down the little room. After a while he took the official letter out of his pocket again and began childish calculations. The result was the same. A hundred pounds clear of debt, and no hopes.

Outside it was growing dark and the lights were coming out in Piccadilly. He leaned against the window and stared out. He looked perceptibly older, and a new deep line had dug itself across his forehead. Get some work. Show all these bad-tempered war heroes that you could do something for yourself even if you had been born too late for their rotten War. Queer, he thought, ironically, they go on about the War as if it were an awful shame and too bad it happened and yet they look down on us for missing it. Got on their nerves, I dare say. Well, here's to them, may they have a bigger and better war soon. If someone did start one to-night I shouldn't have to look for a job, he thought. He laughed, and felt more cheerful. What about dinner? Mrs. Mapes expected him to dine out on Tuesdays. He heard her fussing in the hall, and obediently left the house, but not to dine. Better save the money.

In the morning he began his cautious and inexperienced efforts to find a job. He told no one about the loss of his money. A new unyouthful wisdom suggested to him that a number of persons who might be willing to help a rich young man would cease abruptly to take any interest in him when they knew the truth. He called first on the London agents of his father's New York lawyers, and a grimly uninterested old gentleman suggested emigration. He spoke of assisted passages and seemed to think that a hundred pounds would be quite a lot of money in what he persisted in calling "the new young countries."

Not so young as they used to be though, are they?" David said.

"What's that? Young enough, young enough—for a man willing to work. When I was your age a young man. . . ."

When you were my age, David thought without malice, you were just stepping into your father's shoes in a nice little sharking business. He got up, thanked the old gentleman, and left. I may have to emigrate, he said to himself, but not until I'm pushed off into the sea. The image of Elizabeth obscured for a moment the lines of city traffic. She might need him.

And then where'd she be, with me off dazzling a new country with my hundred pounds? No, sir. Not yet."

During the week that followed, the old gentleman's new country began to turn from a grim joke to a grim possibility. Those of his friends who took him seriously were as one in assuring him that there was nothing he could do to make himself useful.

If you're as bored as all that with drawing cheques to self why don't you go and shoot lions?"

I said something useful," David offered.

All right then—politics."

Useful man, useful."

Well, go away and don't bother me. Can't you see I'm busy? I haven't got a private fortune.

Most of the people whose advice he sought laughed heartily and invited him to have a drink. Or to take up crochet work, or white mice. He laughed back politely. It began to look as though he would have to emigrate to get away from his friends' sense of humour. He gave Mr. and Mrs. Mapes notice and paid all the outstanding bills. One afternoon, at the beginning of his second week, he found himself sitting beside St. John Kent in the library of the club. He was in no mood for swallowing any more gibes, and did not speak. The

elder man glanced at him curiously. After a while he said:

"Er, East. Were you serious when you asked me about a job?"

No. Drunk, David said, curtly. He remembered quickly that one should be polite to War heroes, and looked up with an apologetic smile. "Sorry, sir. But if you were thinking of offering me a job as second parlourmaid to your aunt——"

"I wasn't. Kent said. "I was going to say, why don't you take up flying?"

"Do they pay you to fly?"

"Certainly."

"When do I start?" the boy said.

Kent smiled rather grimly. "I'll give you a letter to my brother. He's a director of Empire Air Routes. You can train as one of their pilots. When you're trained, you'll start work and draw your pay. I imagine the pay doesn't matter to you." He glanced at David from the corners of his eyes.

"Does it take long to train?"

"Depends on you. Ever done any flying?"

"No." How long did a hundred pounds last if you ate sparingly and lived in a cheap room? "I'll know soon enough," he thought, comfortably. The relief of having something definite to do overwhelmed him. He turned scarlet and stammered:

"Don't think of it," Kent said.

"I'm really awfully obliged to you, sir."

"Well—don't kill yourself flying."

David laughed. "I shan't do that."

"People do." Kent said. His face tied up. Thinking of their old War again, David said to himself. He smiled at Kent.

"Thank you very much, sir."

"I'll write that letter," Kent said. "Too many middle-aged pilots wanting jobs for you to stand much chance without it."

DAVID walked out of the club with the letter in his pocket. Kent had telephoned to arrange an interview for him. He was to present himself in the morning with his letter. The letter was a matter of form, Kent said; he would be taken on if the doctors passed him. No fear of that. He walked quickly in the bright, hot sunshine towards his flat. When he opened the door of his sitting-room there was Elizabeth. She looked up as he came in, and smiled. He stood very still.

"Will you take me to the Essex House dance to-night?"

"If you want me to."

"Half London will be there."

"What's the other half doing?"

"I don't know." She laughed up at him. "It's decent of you to come."

"Don't be an idiot," David said. "I like dancing, and you and I go well together. I shall probably fall over you. I haven't danced for a month."

Elizabeth put out her cigarette. "I was going with Charles Holroyd."

David looked at her. "What happened? Couldn't he come?"

"I told him not to come near me."

"Not so much use at a dance," David ventured.

"It's very funny." She was not smiling. "You ought to know—Charles has dropped the idea of being in love with me. No, that's not fair. I couldn't stand not knowing any longer, and I told him he must make up his mind about us."

"Well?" David said.

"He was a day or two doing that. Then he said he couldn't give Harriet up. I don't blame him so very much. It would have been pretty ghastly for him—the children and his career and all that. I can see it all right."

David's relief was so overwhelming that he was afraid she would see it in his face. He spoke quickly. "Are you sure it's all over, my dear?"

"Sure as dying. I feel quite dreadful about it, too. Don't think I'm pitying myself."

"You'll get over it," David said.

"Don't I know it?" She stood up, smiling at him. "Have such fun thinking about it in a year's time."

"You won't remember it in a year."

"I have a very good memory. I remember things," Charles said.

"Don't."

"All right. I'll behave myself. I am behaving. I haven't shed one tear, and I ate a good breakfast this morning. I did." She looked at herself in the mirror. "Do you mind if I dance with you all the evening? I like you better than anyone else."

"Thanks," David said, dryly.

"You let me pester you with my troubles and you don't talk about your own. If you have any. I hate other people's troubles."

He did his best to remember it when they were trotting up and down the same three feet of floor at Essex House. The room was hot, crowded, and noisy. After one dance Elizabeth said she had had enough, and they fought their way out of the room and along a corridor into the big supper room. Small tables were set close together against the walls, and in the middle of the room two professional dancers, with fixed smiles and an air of indifference, were performing a dance that exacted the greatest possible quickness of eye and limb and an exhausting energy. A few people at the tables were looking at them.

David noticed an empty table in the corner. They went over to it and sat down.

and in a moment a waiter came up and said "Sorry, sir, this table is engaged." David gave him a pound note and he went away again. A few minutes later four persons came towards the corner and spoke to the waiter but he knew nothing and after standing about for a while they drifted away. David felt very sorry for them. They were a middle-aged man and woman and two very young girls, and they seemed lost and bewildered. They should have known better than to come.

He had himself well in hand. He was watching Elizabeth with an indulgent, amused air, the affectionate elder brother. He did it very well, and Elizabeth was being wilfully nice to him. She either was or was pretending to be happy and pleased. He could see that she knew he was thinking how beautiful she was. She rested her elbows on the table and talked away quickly and gaily to him, looking directly into his

*A large photograph of Elizabeth faced Kent. "I went out to France with her brother," he observed. "He was my company commander."*

face, and smiling. It was a trick she played, of seeming to be pleased and interested and caring a great deal for the person to whom she was talking. David knew it quite well. After a time he gave up trying to pretend to himself that he was cured of Elizabeth and surrendered himself to a maddening and delicious alternation of misery and happiness.

For a few moments he watched the dancers in the middle of the room. He was recalled by a change of tone in Elizabeth's voice.

'Listen to me, David, please.'

He smiled at her. 'I am listening.'

'You weren't. You were thinking of something else.'

He felt an unexpected spasm of anger. 'Well, I suppose you'll tell me you haven't been thinking of Holroyd all the evening.'

'That's no use, Davy,' Elizabeth said softly.

'I beg your pardon,' David said.

He sat still and watched Elizabeth. She was thinking quickly about something. He saw her face clear up. She stretched her arm over the table and touched his hand.

'That's all over now,' she said, swiftly. 'It never happened.'

He looked at her. 'What do you mean?'

'It's over and done with. Don't you understand me? There isn't any Charles any more.'

'Glad to hear it,' he said. He did not look glad. He folded his hands on the table and looked down his nose. His face twitched, as if he might be going to laugh.

'Do we have to talk about it all over again?' he asked.

Elizabeth smiled at him. 'Why not talk about it?'

'Of course, if you like. But if it's done with—'

'I told you it was done with,' Elizabeth said. 'This afternoon I told you. It's over for ever. I was rather hoping you were going to ask me to marry you some time, and I was going to say yes. Will you marry me, Davy?'

'No,' David said.

'Not even supposing—I mean it?'

'Not even then.'

Elizabeth had been looking into his face, smiling brightly and trying to talk in an inconsequential manner. '"I see," she said, quietly. "What a fool I am. Of course you wouldn't want me. I can't blame you. Such a lot."'

'You don't want to marry me, Elizabeth.'

He half thought she did. Her hands were shaking. She put them out of sight when she saw him looking at them.

'I like you more than anyone in the world,' she said, hurriedly. '"We could have a good time. Travel. Buy the biggest car in the world, and see life. Ride. Dance. See places, Davy. Have a lot of fun."'

'You don't understand anything,' David said, pleasantly. He stopped abruptly and pushed back his chair. '"Let's get out of this."' The waiter was approaching with a tray of favours, dolls, fans, and rattles. The noise had become deafening. '"I said there'd be false noses before midnight. We've just time to get out before the worst happens. Come on."'

She followed him between the tables. In the doorway he saw the four people whose table they had taken. The man looked tired and vexed, and the two girls were on the verge of tears. He stopped and smiled at them. '"I beg your pardon,"' he said. '"If you're looking for a table, there's an empty one in that corner. You'd better go quickly."' The man thanked him, and they hurried off. The younger of the two girls looked back with a friendly smile.

Elizabeth did not speak to him in the taxi. They had reached her aunt's house before he had made up his mind to tell her about the money. She went in and shut the door and he walked away.

IN the morning after he had had his interview with the elder Kent, a cheerful version of his brother, been passed by the doctor and received instructions to report for training in the morning, he went back to Half Moon Street and began to pack his clothes and books, and the other personal possessions with which he had strewn this expensive hired flat. Not a few of these were useless to a young man preparing to earn his living as a commercial pilot. He decided to sell them and bank the proceeds. Halfway through his packing he paused to wonder why he was not more upset by this abrupt reversal of his life. Far from being upset, he was actually happy and excited, with the feeling of things happening and life growing more and more interesting and amusing all the time. He resumed his packing, but as if it had been lying in wait for an unguarded moment, the thought of Elizabeth swooped down on him, making him catch his breath and groan. Why hadn't he told her about the money last night? She would think he just didn't want her. He turned red. There was nothing in the world he wanted so much. Some part of him, which had aged during the last two weeks, pulled him up short. 'Don't be a fool,' it said, 'that's a lover.'

He heard the bell. A moment later Mrs. Mapes opened the door, ushering in Kent.

Kent limped into the room and sat down. 'Nice place of yours,' he commented.

He glanced round. "I see you're packing. You young ass. Why didn't you tell me you'd lost your money?"

David blushed. "How did you find out?"

"I heard a rumour you might be involved in the Hardy crash. That was after you spoke to me the first time about a job. I wrote to a friend of mine in New York to make inquiries and he cabled me this morning. You're an unutterable fool."

"I thought I'd pull something off before screaming for help." David murmured.

"Is everything gone?"

"All but a hundred pounds." David said. "But I'm all right. Thanks to you."

Kent looked at him curiously. "You're very calm about it," he said, "I think I should have lost my head—at your age."

"At my age you were winning the War."

Kent nodded. "I see. You mean this is your War?"

"I don't know what I mean." David said. "Except—I suppose the War was an awful shock to all you people. I wasn't even at school when it started, and I missed all that. But it had an effect, all the same. I mean, why be surprised at anything that happens? It's all in the day's work."

"Are you putting this on?" Kent asked grimly.

"I don't think so. I suppose I'm upset really. But what I feel is—the world's spinning so quickly, how can you be sure of anything? Rich to-day and poor to-morrow, you know. Have all the fun you can get and don't fuss."

"The modern *Credo*," Kent said.

"Is it? It suits me."

Kent did not say anything. He looked round the room again. A large photograph of Elizabeth faced him from the top of a pile of books. "I went out to France with her brother," he observed. "He was my company commander. Killed at Loos."

"Do you know Elizabeth?" David said. He was surprised by the effort it cost him to say her name aloud.

"Of course I do," Kent said, carelessly. "Do you imagine I go about in blinkers because I'm a cripple? I saw her this morning, and showed her the cable from my New York friend."

He stood up, resting his weight on the edge of the table. "Let me know if there's anything more I can do."

"If there was only something I could do for you," David exclaimed.

Kent smiled, a shy absent smile.

He limped away. David went back to his packing. "I like him so much, and I shall never know him," he thought. "You'd think the War wouldn't matter now, but it does." He stooped to a pile of books, straightened himself, and saw Elizabeth reflected in the mirror over the fireplace. She was laughing.

He spun round. His heart had begun to behave in the worst way at the first glimpse of her. He admonished himself severely and advanced to meet her with commendable calm.

"Don't be an ass," Elizabeth said.

His calm crashed, vanished. "I'm not," he said, hotly.

Elizabeth sat down. "You were one last night," she said, placidly. "Why didn't you tell me about the money?"

"You said you wanted to travel," David said, absurdly. "Costs a lot of money to travel these days, you know."

"Did I say that?" she murmured. "I meant with you, of course." She looked at him. "It wouldn't be much fun travelling by myself."

"Well, I can't travel with you," David said loudly. "I've got to work."

ELIZABETH stood up. She was laughing again, with her hand at her mouth. "I *said* you were an ass. So am I. I was an ass to ask you to marry me like that, just because I felt done for and wanted a hand, and you were an ass not to tell me what had happened to you."

"Then you don't want to marry me after all," David said. He felt flat, but he spoke curtly, and looked her in the eyes.

"Not yet," Elizabeth said. "Not until we've got used to the idea." She was smiling. She put her head down. She burst into tears. David took her in his arms. A moment or two later this surprising girl had dried her eyes and was helping him to fold his clothes. She talked all the time as she worked.

"I nearly made a fool of myself over Charles. He wasn't good enough—and he's too old for me. I'll manage better with you, Davy."

David sprang round the table where he was sorting ties, and kissed her with a hard passionate emphasis. "Don't talk about Holroyd to me," he said angrily. "I won't have it. I don't want to hear about him." He stopped, and finished, incoherently. "Nothing unusual about making a fool of yourself. Easy enough. All chaps do it some time. Don't talk about it. That's all."

"Very well," Elizabeth said, meekly. She leaned against him with a sudden abandonment of the bright take-me-or-leave-me manner she wore in common with all the other elegant young creatures of her age and sex. She clutched him by the arms. They stood close together, their young bodies taut and trembling, their faces flushed.

# BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE ZOO AQUARIUM

A SMASH and grab raid on a jeweller's shop in Bond Street or Piccadilly is sufficiently dramatic, but to see a sheet of glass eight feet by four feet and an inch and a half in thickness, break outwards for no apparent reason is even more so, especially when the glass is all that stands between the onlooker and some thousands of gallons of sea-water many tons of gravel, and an assortment of fish, including giant conger-eels. The glass bulges, gives, and with a crash the fish are swept in a lashing, swirling pandemonium towards the Aquarium's emergency exit. "The Aquarium is closed pending structural alterations."

Thank heavens such a catastrophe has never occurred at the London Zoo Aquarium, special precautions having been taken to make such an event an impossibility. But disasters of the kind have occurred elsewhere, and I quote it merely to convince the reader that there is more in "keeping fish" than meets the eye.

Water, especially sea-water, is the most essential part of an aquarium, and the obtaining of the Zoo sea water is a complex undertaking. To ensure that only the purest water is used, it is collected from the middle of the Bay of Biscay and conveyed by tank-steamer to the entrance of the Grand Junction Canal, where it is transferred to barges similar to those which convey drinking water to steamers. The barges bring the water up the canal, which passes through the Zoo Gardens, and from thence it is pumped directly into the enormous reservoirs situated underneath the Aquarium.

Stocking the Aquarium is likewise by no means an easy matter. The dangers and difficulties attendant upon collecting such animals as lions, tigers, elephants, gorillas, etc., have been sung so often that they are now accepted by all without question. Few, however, realize that quite as much risk to life and limb lies behind the seemingly placid exhibits in many of the Zoo's tanks. Collecting for an aquarium involves fishing of every kind in all the seven seas, in tropical swamps, fast rivers, and subterranean waterways. Some of the tropical fish that light up their rock and coral furnished tanks are caught as a result of the diving feats of the natives, since no nets can negotiate the volcanic rocks which they frequent.

In Madeira the native fisherman goes over the side of his fishing boat, naked or clad in shirt and trousers only, and grubs for giant whelks, hermit crabs, and the quaint lobsters that form such popular embellishments of our Madeira tanks. The

By
E. G. BOULENGER
(*Director, Zoological Society's Aquarium*)

Photo: Central Press

*Unlike most inhabitants of the Zoo Aquarium, which are remarkable for the beauty of their vivid colours and forms, the Pipa Toad rarely fails to inspire a shudder of horror in visitors.*

Photo H. N. Dixt

*This fish, whose face has an extraordinary resemblance to a cow's head, is called, naturally enough, the Cow Fish.*

Madeira lobster is, curiously enough, more sophisticated than its northern cousin and refuses to enter pots or traps. There is always the chance that the diver may meet a shark or even worse—a Portuguese man-o'-war, a fairylike jellyfish with a battery of stinging cells that can put a man out of action for a week or more.

Certain brilliant little golden and blue coral fish from the Dutch East Indies, which are a centre of attraction in the Aquarium, are caught in a still stranger fashion. The diver instead of looking for fish makes for an enormous sea anemone—as big as a soup plate—and with it brings on deck a whole shoal of these fishes snug in its interior. How the fish contrive to shelter in a beast whose myriad tentacles spell death to most other creatures remains an unsolved mystery. We have never yet succeeded in bringing the anemones home alive, but the little gate-crashers flourish in the Regent's Park tank without their host whom they do not appear to miss.

To catch a fish alive is one thing, but to convey it safe and sound many thousands of miles is another. To-day many of our super-liners are fitted with specially constructed tanks aerated on a system identical with that installed throughout the Zoo Aquarium, and so the most delicate and fairy-like denizens of the sea are transferred from coral reef to exhibition tank unharmed. The ever popular sea-horses are of such frail constitution that even the short voyage by rail and sea from Arcachon, on the Bay of Biscay, to London would prove too much for them. Hence they are rushed by express train to Paris and there met by a fast aeroplane that whirls them overhead to Regent's Park in the quickest possible time. The sea-horse is a super-straphanger, and maintains his stately equilibrium *en route* by sedately coiling his prehensile tail around a cluster of seaweed—or his nearest neighbour

*The delicate Sea-horses, so like knights in chess, are super-strap-hangers. They maintain their equilibrium when at rest by curling their prehensile tails around seaweeds.*

Even when all possible precautions are taken, some exhibits are so temperamental that they prove indifferent travellers. The octopus — always a great "draw"—is a case in point. He suffers from nerves and registers dismay by clouding his travelling water with ink ejected from a special gland, a proceeding which nearly always undermines his health, and may even result in the animal succumbing to involuntary suicide. Under natural conditions the octopus ejects his ink when pursued by an enemy, with the object of becoming lost, and thus evading and frustrating his pursuer, on the smoke-screen principle adopted by the modern warship.

The difficulties of transport even of the commonest fish are such that a lemon sole or whiting is always worth a hundred times its value on the fishmonger's slab by the time it finds a resting-place at Regent's Park.

Donations reach the Aquarium in the strangest ways. Thus a generous planter once sent us a fine collection of Siamese Fighting Fish, all of which arrived alive and well, each little pugilist being safely incarcerated in a separate whisky bottle. These tiny furies, if put together, fight till their fins are torn to ribbons and will even show fight with their own reflections in a mirror or the polished back of a watch case. In their native land these fish, which seldom measure more than two inches

Photo Reveille Kingston.

*A close-up photograph of one of the brilliantly-coloured Angel Fish, from Brazil. They are easily the popular favourites of the Aquarium.*

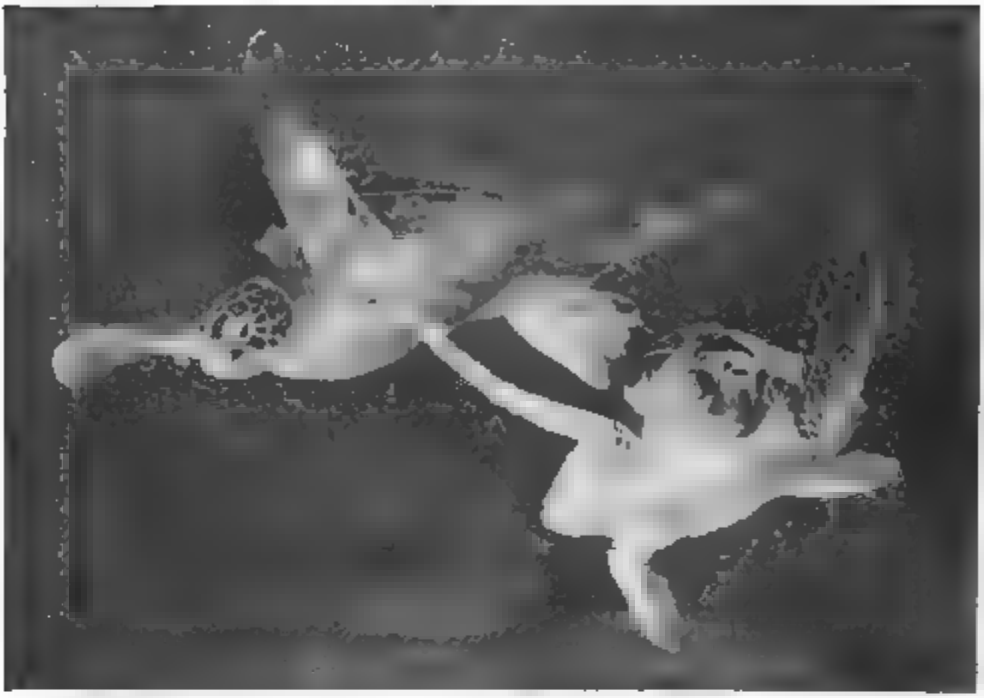


Photo A. W. Kerr

*Turtles, so ungainly on land, become creatures of graceful movement in their natural element.*

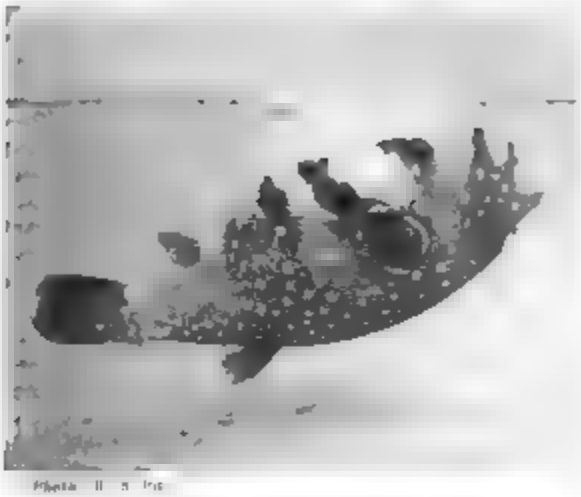
in length, are exploited by the sporting fraternity. Many varieties of the fish have recently been evolved, some merely for show, others for the prize ring. The 'ring' consists of a glass bowl suspended from the ceiling. Fighting Fish tournaments, which are controlled by the State, are held all over Siam, and vast sums are wagered on the results of the fights.

Disastrous was the attempt of another benefactor to send a sort of mixed grill of sea beasts in a single travelling tank, for only the larger members of this unhappy family arrived alive at the Zoo, the smaller creatures having found a last resting-place inside the larger. On another occasion a friend in South America sent me a large tub containing a number of tropical fish. Only one of these arrived alive, namely an electric eel. When it is borne in mind that the electric eel earns a living by killing its prey by the shock which it emits, it is not surprising that only the eel survived the journey.

Occasionally fishes—quite large ones—have reached the Zoo in a dried state. Such a one is the African lung fish, who, according to its habit had during the dry season, made himself a retreat deep in the mud of its native river. The water had dried up, and the river bed had been baked as hard as a brick. The fish arrived safe and snug in a good square block of tropical Africa and was "unpacked" after an hour's labour with the help of chisel and hammer.

Carp will travel for days frozen up in solid ice, provided the water be heavily charged with oxygen prior to refrigeration. Quite recently a twenty-three-pound pike made a five-hour journey to the Zoo in nothing wetter than some damp weeds and an old potato sack. To be sure, he was a little sick on arrival, bringing up the remnants of a moorhen, which an over-eager pressman reported as a swan.

The sprightly lobster can go dry for quite a length of time, but unfortunately, he takes so much air into his system that sudden introduction into his native element would spell certain death from drowning.



*The curious Puffer Fish which, when attacked, inflates its body with air and water, so that it becomes too big for its enemy to swallow. The specimen is seen floating upside down*

to get over this difficulty, lobsters on arrival at the Aquarium are laid on their backs in shallow dishes of sea-water, where they gradually bubble out the air from their interiors, and signify recovery by regaining their feet and offering to take on all comers with their murderous claws

Sharks excepted, few fish are regarded by the public as really dangerous, yet many of the Aquarium's most placid-looking pensioners are to be more dreaded than many of the Reptile House boarders Weever fish, file fish, and sting rays carry serrated daggers that inflict wounds which invariably turn septic and have been known to cost an incautious handler his life Electric fish are of many kinds, and all can give shocks

*A shoal of the beautiful Angel Fish The fish at the top of the photograph shows how disproportionately narrow their bodies are to the depth*

much more amusing to watch than to experience. The electric eel from the Amazon, previously referred to, grows to eight feet in length and can 'put over' four hundred volts, a battery which, in a certain foreign aquarium, once caused a keeper to take an unpremeditated dive from the service gallery into the depth below.

It was these huge electric eels which largely accounted for the high prices once asked for the beautiful little Brazilian angel fish now extensively bred in captivity. The collector out for new stock must perforce wade the waterways frequented by these fishes at night searching the stream-bed with a lantern. What with the proximity of electric eels, jaguars, twenty-five-feet-long anacondas, and an ever-present swarm of insect pests, the difficulties of concentrating on fishing may be imagined. The angel fish itself, though conspicuous as a target seen broadside on, appears as an almost hair-thin line from above and must be practically invisible to the fisherman.

Zoo escapes are ever popular with the press, but make less appeal to those immediately concerned. Luckily the Zoo Aquarium has been singularly free from such disasters, but I can recall occurrences at sister institutes which I trust will not be repeated at Regent's Park. There was the case of a sea lion, a variety artist who was 'resting' in a certain provincial aquarium and was given temporary tank room. With the cunning of his kind and an insatiable appetite, he climbed, not into his own pond under cover of darkness, and visited every other tank in turn. He was discovered in the morning shockingly inflated and reclining languidly against a wall with the last fish still protruding from one corner of his mouth.

Perhaps the most notorious aquarium wanderer is the octopus. Unless restrained by stout wire-netting over his tank he will climb up the side and force his way into the lobster or crab tank, and, after a stiff fight with the inhabitants, make a gargantuan meal.

Where tanks are provided with waste plugs, a system not used at the Zoo, the octopus has been known to pull up the plug, let out the water and condemn himself and his companions to death, for he cannot live long out of water. Worse still, he may join the public in the observation corridor, as occurred not long ago at a certain foreign aquarium, where an octopus 'joined the ladies' by climbing through a ventilator and landing on a lady's hat.

The London Aquarium's most persistent wanderer was an eel. Night after night he would leave his compartment for that of

*A view behind the scenes at the Aquarium, showing the service gallery from which the fish are fed.*

Photo A. H. Ac

*The natural home of these Coral Fish, strikingly banded in gold and blue, is in the interior of an enormous living sea-anemone, whose tentacles are death to most other creatures.*

the sea anemones, ten tanks away, and in the morning would be removed to his own quarters. Nor did he ever settle down until I eventually indulged him in his fancy, when his wanderlust apparently left him, for he never attempted to leave the tank of his own choice.

Feeding the Aquarium's two thousand inmates is a business which involves a host of unseen workers. Chopped fish is good enough for all the larger exhibits, and finely shredded horse's heart is also popular. But such small and delicate creatures as the sea horse, with his keyhole mouth, or the fairy-like inmates of the tropical hall, are not so easily catered for. The sea-horses' standby consists of sandhoppers, or sea fleas as they are popularly called. To catch these common, but unlovely objects of the seashore is a whole-time job for one man and is surely one of the queerest of queer trades. He catches his lively merchandise in diverse traps baited with carrion, and winnows out the catch from the beach rubbish through a series of sieves. The little fresh-water water fleas on which the small tropical fish are fed are farmed on the premises. They flourish in large numbers in the crocodile tank in the Reptile House, where they multiply with gratifying prolificness.

Care and good living certainly pay in the Aquarium. So well do many fish prosper that they are well on their way to outgrow their tanks, and it is possible that Zoo bass and conger may eventually provide excellent meals for the staff. Even so, we shall never be in a position to accommodate a certain lady who appeared one Saturday evening armed with a capacious shopping basket. She was under the impression that the fish were renewed every week and that Saturday night was celebrated by a general clearance by auction.

*"So far as we know at present, Mr Stern," said the Sergeant, "you are the last person who saw Mr Yarrow alive. And Mr Yarrow was murdered."*

# THE TIDAL RIVER

## 'SAPPER'

"I'll very person I've been wanting to see. I rang up your rooms and your man told me you'd probably be dining in your club."

I glanced up from my coffee. A man by the name of Mervyn Davidson was standing by our chairs. I only knew him slightly but Ronald Standish had shot with him once or twice.

"Could you possibly come down to my place to-morrow,' continued Davidson, "or are you too busy?'

"Do you mean professionally?' asked Ronald.

"Yes," said the other, pulling up a chair. "Do you mind, at any rate, if I tell you the story?"

"Fire right ahead," said Ronald, lighting a cigar.

"The thing happened yesterday," began Davidson, "and at first everybody thought it was an accident. However, as you don't know any of the people concerned I'd better start by putting you wise to them and to the locality. You've been down my way, I think?'

"Only once," said Ronald. "So take it that I'm quite ignorant.'

I will," said Davidson. "My house is just five miles from the sea, and as you may perhaps remember, the River Ling forms one boundary to the property."

Ronald nodded.

"Yes, I recollect that. Tidal, isn't it as far as you?"

'For three or four miles farther up stream. A muddy bit of water, but unfortunately it plays a big part in the tragedy which concerns my next-door neighbour, a retired business man named Yarrow. Do you want my estimate of the gentleman, or would you prefer to keep an open mind?'

"I want everything that bears on the case,' said Ronald.

'His character certainly does that, said Davidson, 'but I didn't want to bias you in any way. In short, then, he was a most unpleasant individual."

"Was?" Ronald raised his eyebrows.

The other nodded.

I'm coming to that. Yes, he was a most unpleasant man, and one of the

*ILLUSTRATED BY JACK M. FAULKS*

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incomprehensible things of life is how his perfectly charming wife came to marry him. She is years younger than he was and an extremely pretty woman. He must have been well over fifty, whereas she is on the right side of thirty. Exactly what his business was I can't tell you; he was one of the most morose and uncommunicative men I've ever met. But it must have been lucrative, as there was no shortage of money about the ménage. I've dined with them off and on, and I know the style they lived in.

'It was not, however, an entertainment I indulged in more than I could help because the atmosphere of the household was so damnable. He was frequently rude to her in front of the servants, and even if he wasn't that he had that cold, sarcastic manner that longed to make one want to hit him.

He had one hobby, and one hobby only, so far as I know—fishing in the Ling. Everyone to his own taste, and if it appeals to a man to sit on the bank of a muddy river fishing for uneatable fish with a worm and a float, by all manner of means let him do so. He certainly did, for hours on end. The river flowed past his place, but between it and his boundary was a right of way. And it was at one particular spot on this path that he always took up his position.

NOW though the path is a right of way it is very little used. Probably not more than two people a day go along it, though sometimes on Sundays the customary loving couples walk there. But on week-days it is practically deserted. Well, it so happened that the day before yesterday I was down near the river giving instructions to my gardener about one or two things, when I saw a man called Stapleton coming along the path. His trousers were dripping with water, and the instant he saw me he gave a shout.

For God's sake come, Davidson! Yarrow has been drowned.

The gardener and I went at once, and sure enough it was so. Wedged against a sunken tree by the pressure of the water was his body, and a glance was sufficient to show that it was too late to do anything. His hat was on the bank, and a campstool and creel.

'I tried to get him out,' said Stapleton, 'but he was too heavy for me.

When did you find him?' I asked.

'Five minutes ago,' he said. 'I was walking from Briggs's farm, and as I passed I saw that hat, which I recognized as his. So I looked over the edge, and there he was.

Between us we hoisted the body out and laid it on the bank. I sent my gardener back for a hurdle, and while he was away we made an attempt at doing some artificial respiration. But it was utterly hopeless, and we both knew it.

How on earth did it happen, I wonder?' I said after we had desisted.

The only thing I can think of,' said Stapleton, 'is that he fainted, or had a fit, and fell in. The water is comparatively shallow, if he'd been conscious he'd have had no difficulty in getting out.

Which was perfectly true, as the bank, though steep, was not high. No one would have had the smallest trouble in scrambling out, and it seemed to me that his solution must be the correct one.

At last the hurdle arrived, and we put him on it. And then it struck me that somebody had better go on in advance to prepare Mrs. Yarrow for the news. Stapleton evidently did not want to, so I said I would. I didn't relish the job, with a woman one never knows. He had treated her like a dog during his life, but for all that you can't tell how they'll take things. To my intense relief she kept perfectly calm. She turned white and swayed a bit, then she asked me quite quietly what to do.

I think the best thing would be to put the body in the billiard-room,' I said. 'You realize, Mrs. Yarrow, that he'll have to be seen by a doctor, and possibly the police may come into it. But, of course, it will be entirely a formality. It's obvious what happened.'

I repeated Stapleton's theory, and she listened in silence. And then, in view of subsequent developments, she made a rather strange remark.

My husband has never fainted in his life.'

At the time I thought nothing of it, they were just carrying in the body, and I went to see if I could be of any assistance. We laid it on the floor, and Stapleton put the hat and the creel on the table. And then we waited a bit awkwardly, nobody quite knowing what to do next. I dismissed the gardener and the man who had helped him, and Stapleton and I talked in the hushed tones one uses in the presence of death. Little pools of water were forming on the floor under him, but it seemed indecent to move him again.

I liked him, you know,' said Stapleton, 'though I know he was not popular. What a pretty mouldy end. And to think that I took a photograph of him on my way out to Briggs this morning. I never thought that the next time I saw the poor devil he'd be like this.

Half an hour later Dr. Granger arrived, and Stapleton and I left him to do what was

necessary Mrs. Yarrow had gone to her room, and I gave a message for her to the butler to say that if there was anything I could do to help she must have no hesitation in ringing me up. Then since there was nothing more to be done I suggested to Stapleton that he should come over to my house and have a drink I felt I badly needed one

An hour passed when suddenly the telephone rang. I went to it, and heard the voice of Sergeant Grayson at the other end. Being on the Bench I knew him very well, a good man distinctly above the average local policeman in intelligence Would I go up to the Yarrows house, and take Stapleton with me some startling developments had taken place

WE went immediately, wondering what on earth they could be, and the butler showed us into the Board-room The doctor was still there with the sergeant and a constable, and all their faces were very grave

Sorry to trouble you sir' said Grayson to me, ' but it was unavoidable May I ask both you gentlemen to tell me all you know

We did so, and when he'd finished he looked significantly at the doctor, who nodded

The fact is, Davidson,' said Granger that this is not a simple case of drowning Yarrow was drowned all right but it was the result of foul play He didn't faint or have a fit which was what I, too, first thought he was stunned by being hit a heavy blow with some weapon on the base of his skull He then pitched forward into the water, and probably was drowned almost instantaneously

Good God I cried, aghast ' Are you quite, doctor ? '

Quite sure, I'm sorry to say The bruise is there plain for all to see, and by the feel of it I think something is chipped or broken inside. So you can guess how fierce the blow was

But who did it ? I said, staring at him

That, sir,' said the sergeant, is what we've got to try and find out And we have one very valuable piece of evidence. Mr Yarrow's watch stopped at half-past two Which proves conclusively that the poor gentleman met his end before that hour Now, sir '—he turned to Stapleton— as you seem to have been one of the last people to see him alive can you add anything to what you have already told us ? '

I can't, Sergeant, answered Stapleton I passed Mr Yarrow just as he was packing up for lunch. It must have been about one o'clock as I reached Briggs's house at ten minutes past I had one film left in my camera and as I wanted to get the roll finished I asked him to pose in the most characteristic attitude I could think of sitting on his campstool, fishing. I then had lunch and the rest you know I left Briggs's farm between five-and-twenty and twenty to three, and found the body in the river I went in and tried to get him out, but I couldn't And then Mr Davidson came on the scene

" ' Don't you think, Sergeant, I put in, that it would be a good thing to get hold of the butler and find out about times from him ? '

' So the butler was sent for and it's his evidence that has brought me to you, Standish I can't believe the boy did it, but I'm bound to say things look just about as black as they can be Sorry I'm jumping ahead too fast

' It appears that Yarrow came in to lunch shortly after one to find a youngster called Christopher Stern having a cocktail with Mrs. Yarrow And now comes the part that has got to be told, though naturally the butler said nothing about it He knew, of course—we all did you can't keep things like that dark in the country Young Stern is in love with Mrs. Yarrow and has been for years, though what her feelings are on the matter I don't know

' At any rate, it was quite clear from what the butler implied that his master was not at all pleased to find Stern there, and when he discovered that his wife had asked the boy to lunch he was even less pleased Looking back now I remember having heard from other sources that Yarrow was very jealous of his wife, and it was clear from what the butler said that the lunch was not a great success. We pressed him to be more explicit, but he is a good servant. And the most we could get out of him was that Yarrow was in a bad temper

Now comes the damning part. At a quarter past two Yarrow gathered his fishing tackle together and the butler saw him standing in the hall talking to Stern He was speaking angrily though the butler did not hear what he said But it ended in the two men leaving the house together and taking the direction of the river

Davidson paused and beckoning a waiter, ordered drinks

" More than that, he continued " the butler could not say but it was enough to make things begin to look ugly for Stern. And the boy's own statement of what happened didn't help much. We telephoned for him and he came round at once. And I think we all watched him as he came into the room. He saw the body turned as white

as a sheet and clutched the table as if he was about to fall.

'What's happened?' he muttered.

'I want you to tell me, sir,' said the sergeant, 'exactly what took place this afternoon after you left this house with Mr Yarrow.'

'But I don't understand,' stammered the youngster. 'I know nothing about it.'

After a while he pulled himself together, and his story tallied exactly with the butler's. Yarrow and he had had words after lunch—he refused to say what about but we all of us knew—and it had finished up with Yarrow forbidding him the house. They had gone out together and he had walked with Yarrow as far as the river. And there he had left him to his business.

'Where did you go?' asked the sergeant.

'Along a path somewhere. I really forget,' said Stern.

'And what time did you leave Mr Yarrow?'

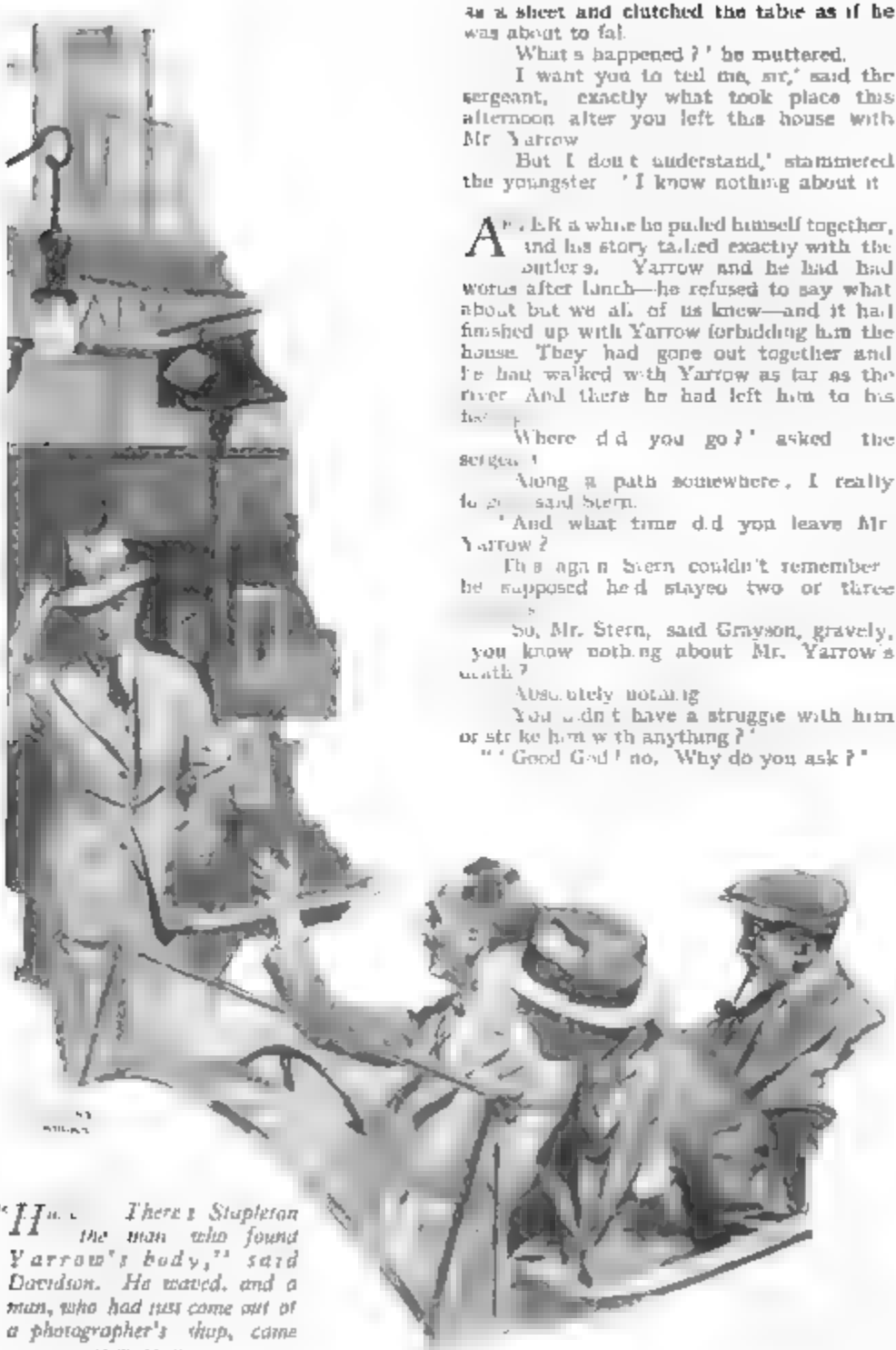
This again Stern couldn't remember. He supposed he'd stayed two or three hours.

'So, Mr. Stern,' said Grayson, gravely, 'you know nothing about Mr. Yarrow's death?'

'Absolutely nothing.'

'You didn't have a struggle with him or strike him with anything?'

'"Good God! no. Why do you ask?"



*"Hullo! There's Stapleton the man who found Yarrow's body," said Davidson. He waved, and a man, who had just come out of a photographer's shop, came over to us.*

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Was anyone else there while you were with him?'

'I saw no one.'

'And you didn't pass anybody as you went along the path?'

Again he shook his head.

'Not that I'm aware of,' he said. 'And then after a moment, he added: 'But I was all worked up and I might not have noticed. Anyway, he cried wildly, what is it all about? Why are you asking me all these questions?'

'I am asking you these questions, Mr Stern,' said Grayson, 'because so far as we know at present you are the last person who saw Mr Yarrow alive. And Mr Yarrow was murdered.'

'Murdered!'

The word was just breathed, barely audible, and once again Stern clutched the table.

'Who by? But—but, it looks as if he'd been drowned. And then, wildly, 'Great Heavens! you don't suspect *me*?'

Grayson stared at him.

'I didn't say I did, Mr Stern. But you left the house at a quarter past two with Mr Yarrow, you must therefore, have arrived at the river at about twenty past. You tell me you remained talking for two or three minutes.' He paused impressively. 'And Mr Yarrow was murdered before half past.'

'You keep on saying he was murdered,' said Stern. 'How do you know that?'

'He was hit on the back of the head and stunned,' answered Grayson. 'Then he fell into the water and was drowned.'

'And at that it was left for the time. Whether or not they have actually arrested young Stern yet, I don't know, but it's only a question of hours before they do so. And I wondered, Standish, if you would come down and run your eye over the country, so to speak. I'd like to do everything I can for Stern—he's an extraordinarily nice boy. But I must confess it looks pretty hopeless to me.'

'You think then that he did it?' said Ronald.

'What else can one think? We know that he was with Yarrow just before it happened, we know that they were having a quarrel over Mrs. Yarrow. We know also that the place where they were is usually entirely deserted, so that the chances of someone else being there are remote.'

Davidson shrugged his shoulders.

'I am quite prepared to believe,' he continued, 'that Stern didn't even know he'd killed him. That in a moment of unconquerable rage he hit Yarrow and knocked him out, and that then, after he had gone, Yarrow rolled over and fell in the water and was drowned. In which case it might be possible to make it a case of manslaughter only.'

'What does Mrs. Yarrow say?' asked Ronald.

'Nothing at all so far as I know. I gather that she has admitted that her husband did not like Stern, but we knew that already. In fact, with regard to yesterday, the butler knows far more than she does.'

'Well, there are certainly one or two very significant points,' said Ronald, lighting a cigarette. 'So, if you like, Davidson, Bob and I will come down tomorrow. I suppose there's a pub somewhere handy.'

'My dear fellow, I wouldn't dream of letting you do that. I can put both of you up with the greatest of pleasure in the world. But I'm afraid it's pretty hopeless for young Stern. There's a good train from Liverpool Street at ten. I'll meet you at the other end.'

'What do you make of it, Bob?' said Ronald, as Davidson went off to write a letter.

'Told as he's told it I must say I agree with him. It looks black for Stern. Motive, opportunity, time—everything seems to fit.'

'Almost too well,' said Ronald. 'However, we'll see.'

TRUE to his promise, Davidson met us at the station.

'They've arrested him,' were his first words. 'I'm afraid it's a waste of time for you, Standish.'

'When did they do it?' asked Ronald.

'Immediately after the inquest this morning. Hullo, there's Stapleton, the man who found Yarrow's body.'

He waved his hand, and a good-looking, slightly-built man of about forty, who had just come out of a photographer's shop, came over to the car.

'Bad affair this,' he said, 'about young Stern. Still, I suppose it was only to be expected.'

Davidson introduced us, and Stapleton looked at Ronald with interest.

'I've heard of you, Mr Standish,' he said. 'Tom Ponsonby, who is a distant cousin of mine, is never tired of singing your praises.'

'That's very nice of him,' said Ronald.

'Have you come down here over this business, or merely to stay with Davidson?'

'A little of both,' said Ronald, with a smile. 'I hear they've arrested Stern.'

The other nodded.

'I don't see how they could avoid it.

he replied. "If ever there was an obvious case this is it."

He fumbled in his pocket.

"By the way, Davidson, I've just had that roll of films developed. Here is the last photograph of the poor chap taken an hour and a half before his death. Good, isn't it?"

"Very," said Davidson, passing it to us.

It showed Yarrow seated on his camp-stool watching his float. His face was in profile, his hat and creel were on the bank beside him.

"I'm glad I got it," said Stapleton, simply. "It's just the pose I'd like to remember him by."

"I wonder if you would allow me to keep this," said Ronald. "Or perhaps, you would let me have another print made. My reason is that it helps one to visualize the scene in a way that mere imagination can't do."

"By all manner of means keep it," cried Stapleton. "I can easily have another done."

"I suppose, Mr. Stapleton, that you saw no sign of any weapon on the bank when you found the body?"

"It never dawned on me to look for one. I assumed it was a common or garden case of drowning. The possibility of foul play never entered my head."

"Naturally not," said Ronald. "It wouldn't."

WE stayed there talking for a few moments, then Stapleton got into his car and went off.

"Have you formed any plan of campaign, Standish?" asked Davidson. "Or do you think the thing is too hopeless to worry about?"

"Far from it," said Ronald.

Davidson glanced at him in surprise.

"You mean that you think young Stern has a chance?"

"I most certainly do," answered Ronald. "But until I've seen one thing I can't say more than that."

"And what is this thing you want to see?" asked Davidson, curiously.

"The dead man's watch," said Ronald. "I take it you can manage that for me."

"I suppose Grayson has it," said Davidson. "It's a vital piece of evidence for the prosecution."

"Or for the defence," remarked Ronald with a faint smile. "However, we'd better wait and see."

"For the defence!" spluttered Davidson. "What on earth are you driving at, my dear man?"

But Ronald refused to elucidate further, or even to discuss the matter while we had lunch. But after the meal was over he suggested an immediate move.

"Let's go first to the place where it happened," he said. "And then, if you'd ring through to him, Davidson, we'll go along and interview Sergeant Grayson."

"Certainly," answered our host. "I'll take you there at once. And I'll have the car waiting in the drive so that we'll waste no time."

He left us to go and telephone, and I tackled Ronald about the watch. But he was in one of his uncommunicative moods, and I could get nothing more out of him than the illuminating statement that it was damned rum. Then Davidson returned, and we started for the river.

"That is where I was when I first saw Stapleton," said our host, pointing to a clump of trees in his park. "We've got about another quarter of a mile to go."

We turned into the path that ran along the bank. On our right through the bushes which fringed the river we could see the muddy waters of the Ling; on our left ran more bushes and a fence.

"Yarrow's property," remarked Davidson. "You'll be able to see the house soon through the trees."

At length he paused. We had come to a small clearing.

"Here's the spot," he said. "You can actually see the marks of the legs of his camp-stool in the ground."

Ronald nodded, and stood motionless studying the surroundings. The gap in the bushes on the bank measured about ten yards, and the river was some thirty yards wide. Behind us the undergrowth was dense. Up and down stream the path twisted so that the place was completely secluded. On the right-hand side of the clearing a tree, half waterlogged, stuck out into the water, and Davidson pointed to it.

"It was against that the body had drifted," he said. "The tide was ebbing at the time and carried it there."

Ronald nodded again.

"I see it's just high tide now," he remarked. "Let's get the depth of the water."

He picked up a long stick and took some soundings.

Three or four feet close inshore and a muddy bottom.

He straightened up and then for nearly half an hour he crept round on his hands and knees examining the ground at the bottom of the bushes. He went each way along the path exploring it minutely, while Davidson watched him with curiosity tinged with slight impatience. At length he gave it up and rejoined us.

I can find nothing," he said. But, of course, the ground is hard

What did you expect to find?' asked Davidson

Expect is too strong a word,' answered Ronald. All that can be said is that I thought it possible I might

He lit a cigarette, and we waited

Let us try and size up the situation, he said. "To start with an obvious platitude either young Stern did it or someone else did. If it was young Stern we are wasting our time, because frankly Davidson, your suggestion of manslaughter won't wash. A man who is stunned by a dunt on the head sufficient to break a bone lies where he falls. He doesn't wriggle about afterwards. Therefore, whoever hit Yarrow saw him fall into the river.

"So we'll consider the other alternative—that it was someone else who murdered him. Now from what you have told us Yarrow was an unpopular man, so he probably had plenty of enemies. You further stated that fishing from this spot was his invariable hobby, a fact which other people must have been quite as well aware of as you were. Suppose, then, that this hypothetical someone else, desirous of seeing Yarrow, came here knowing that he'd find him. Suddenly he hears Yarrow approaching and quarrelling with Stern. He hides in the bushes, waits till Stern goes, then seeing his opportunity bashes Yarrow on the head and watches him drown.

I glanced at Davidson. His face expressed polite interest. And I must confess that I was a bit disappointed myself. Perhaps I had expected too much after such a prolonged examination, but the bald fact remained that an intelligent child of ten could have reached the same conclusion.

And since," continued Ronald, imperturbably, "the betting is four to one that that or something like it is what did take place. I thought I might find traces of his footprints.

And now we stared at him—this was a more positive assertion.

How on earth can you have arrived at that?' demanded Davidson.

Ronald smiled.

Let's go and see Sergeant Grayson," he said. "And there is only one thing more I've got to say at the moment. If my theory is correct we are dealing with a very clever man, but one who is not quite clever enough."

You'll be telling us you know who it is next," said Davidson, with mild sarcasm.

I haven't a notion,' said Ronald frankly. Not the ghost of an idea. But it will be something if we can prove it wasn't young Stern."

Sergeant Grayson was expecting us, and with a genial and tolerant smile he pronounced the watch.

I hear you want to see it, sir," he said. Though what you think you'll get from it bar the obvious fact that it stopped at half past two is beyond me.

We'll see, Sergeant," said Ronald, cheerfully, as he examined it. By the way, it was in his waistcoat pocket I suppose?'

That's right, sir—attached to a buttonhole by this leather guard.

THE watch was a thin gold one, and the back fitted so tightly that it was only with the help of a penknife that Ronald prised it open. And when he had done so he sat staring at the works with a puzzled frown.

'Have you had this open, Sergeant Grayson?" he said at length.

Can't say I have, sir. Why?"

What do you think made the watch stop?

Water getting in, sir, of course.

Then why is the whole inside bone dry?"

The sergeant scratched his head.

It's two days ago, sir, you know."

'Rot, man," cried Ronald. If enough water had got into that watch to stop it it would still be there after two weeks. It couldn't evaporate.'

He was idly turning the swivel as he spoke, and suddenly a look of keen concentration came on his face.

Great Scott!' he almost shouted. "The main spring is broken.

Must have happened as Mr. Yarrow fell in," said the sergeant. "So that fixes the time exactly."

"My dear sergeant," remarked Ronald, quietly, "I will, if you like, have a small bet with you. I will obtain for you a hundred different watches. You will go to the bank of the river or any similar spot and fall in a hundred times, with a different watch in your waistcoat pocket on each occasion. And if one mainspring breaks, I will present you with a bag of nuts.'

Well, it did this time," said the sergeant, stubbornly.

Look here, Grayson," said Ronald, what makes a mainspring snap? Overwinding—ninety-nine times out of a hundred. Are you going to tell me that Mr. Yarrow during a heated interview with young Stern pulled out his watch and started to wind it up? It's ridiculous.

Not more ridiculous than that someone else did," remarked Davidson.

"That's just where you're wrong," cried Ronald. "Last night I carried out a small experiment. I got into a warm bath wearing

a waistcoat—and deuced absurd I looked, too,' he added, with a grin. "In my waistcoat pocket was a watch. I stopped in the water for twenty minutes, and the watch was still going when I got out. It's the point that struck me the instant I heard your story, Davidson. *This watch stopped too soon.* If young Stern had done it a watch that fits as tight as this one would have been still going at three.

No one said a word we were all too keenly interested.

"When I opened the back,' he continued, "I expected to find it full of water. I was then going to suggest that we should have it thoroughly dried and carry out my experiment of last night with it. The murderer, however, was evidently unable to open it—you saw the difficulty I had—and he was in a hurry. So instead of filling it with water, he deliberately overwound it, thereby breaking the mainspring, and hoped it would not be noticed. Then he set the hands at half-past two, and replaced it in Yarrow's pocket.'

But why should he put them at that hour?' said Grayson.

Expressly to incriminate Stern," cried Ronald, a little irritably. "That surely is obvious.'

But the sergeant had become mulish.

'Theory—all theory' he snorted. "You go your way Mr Standish, and I'll go mine. And when you lay your hands on the man who, having just committed a cold-blooded

*'It was against this tree that the body had drifted," said Davidson. "The tide was ebbing and carried it there."*

murder, had the nerve to do what you have suggested. Mr. Stern will be free within five minutes."

"It's your funeral, Sergeant," said Ronald, quietly. "But I tell you in all seriousness that you are barking up the wrong tree. The bit of evidence that you think most damning is, in reality, what completely exonerates young Stern. Who did it, I don't know. You'll have to find that out."

The trouble of it was that it remained at that. Exhaustive inquiries in the neighbourhood failed to reveal the presence of any stranger; and so far as the local residents were concerned, the whole affair began and ended with Mr. Stern, since public opinion was unanimous that Stern was the only person interested in the case had flagged with his arrest.

Ronald grew more and more irritable. He spent hours on the river bank searching for possible clues without the smallest result. And, at length, even he began to give up hope.

"There's absolutely nothing to give one a pointer, Bob," he cried to me in despair before lunch one day. "I am as convinced as ever that Stern didn't do it, but

who the devil did? I feel it's leaving the youngster in the lurch, but there doesn't seem much use in our stopping on here. We're doing no good."

And Davidson agreed. Though he pressed us to stay as long as we liked, I think, at the bottom of his mind, he had come round to Grayson's opinion that it was just theory. And so we took our departure, though it was like getting a dog away from a bone so far as Ronald was concerned. He had told Stern's solicitor to subpœna him as an expert witness, but I knew he felt uneasy about the result.

"Even if he gets off, and I don't think they'll hang him, it's going to be a damnable thing for the youngster. If the trial was in Scotland, the utmost I should expect would be a verdict of Non Proven. They can't bring that in here, but it's what it will practically amount to. Not one person in a hundred will believe he is innocent, and he'll be under the stigma for the rest of his life."

IT was the evening before the trial, and I was round with him in his rooms. Never have I known him so depressed, and it was not difficult to understand. He felt he had failed, and though it was through no fault of his, the result was the same. And then, quite suddenly, the most amazing change came over his expression.

"My sainted aunt," he shouted. "Let me think a moment."

I glanced over his shoulder. He was studying a snapshot of Yarrow taken by Stapleton.

"What time was it when you and I and Davidson reached the river that first day we were down there?"

"We left the house at a quarter-past three," I said. "So it must have been half-past as near as makes no odds."

"Get Vickers on the 'phone," he cried. "Proof, Bob—proof under my nose all these weeks and I never saw it."

Vickers was the K.C. defending Stern, and I got through at once.

"Tell him I'm coming round to see him immediately," said Ronald, and before I had time to speak he had dashed out, and I heard him shouting for a taxi. And that night it was touch and go that I did not find myself arrested on a similar charge to young Stern. For the irritating devil would say nothing. He kept grinning all over his face and rubbing his hands together.

"Wait till to-morrow, Bob," was all I could get out of him. "And then I can promise you the kick of your young life."

The court was crowded, but through Ronald's influence I got a good seat. And a glance at young Stern's face showed that the news, whatever it was, had been passed on to him. The atmosphere was tense, as it always is during a murder trial, but the prisoner seemed the least concerned person in the place. I saw Davidson and Stapleton not far away in the body of the court, but Ronald had been given a seat just behind Vickers. And then the trial began. Counsel for the Crown outlined the case for the prosecution, and though he spoke with studied moderation it was a pretty damning indictment. He admitted freely that the case rested on circumstantial evidence, but pointed out that ninety per cent. of murder cases did. Then he called his first witness—John Stapleton—who went into the box and took the oath.

He looked, I thought, strained and pale, but that was not to be wondered at. Yarrow had been a friend of his, but apart from that to be one of the principal witnesses when a man's life is at stake is a nerve-wracking ordeal. However, he gave his evidence in a calm and steady voice, and when Vickers rose to cross-examine him, Stapleton gave him a courteous bow.

"Now, Mr. Stapleton, we have heard that you lunched with Mr. Briggs on the day of the murder. What time did you arrive at the house?"

"Between ten and a quarter-past one."

"And it is about ten minutes' walk, is it not, from where Mr. Yarrow was fishing?"

"That is so."

"You therefore left Mr. Yarrow at about one o'clock?"

"Yes."

"Before leaving him, did you take a photograph of him fishing?"

Stapleton looked surprised, as did everyone else, including the Judge, so far the fact had not been mentioned.

"Now you speak of it, I did," said Stapleton. "I'd really forgotten about it."

"But you remember now?"

"Perfectly. I had one exposure to complete the roll, and I took one of him fishing."

"At about one o'clock?"

"Yes. It was just before I left him to go to lunch."

"Is this the photograph you took?"

Vickers held up the snapshot, and Stapleton studied it.

"Yes. That is it."

"And is that tree that one sees half submerged in the water the one against which you found the body?"

"Yes. It is."

Vickers passed the photograph up to the Judge.

"I would ask you to examine it carefully,

m'lud Now, Mr Stapleton, is that tree down stream or up stream from the place where Mr Yarrow was fishing?'

"Down stream"

Vickers produced a book and opened it And suddenly I glanced at Stapleton Ceaselessly he was wetting his lips with his tongue.

I have here," continued counsel, quietly, a book which gives the times of high and low water for every day of the year in every part of the country Would it surprise you to know, Mr Stapleton that on the day Mr Yarrow was murdered, high tide in the River Ling was at one-fifty p m ?

"I will take your word for it," said Stapleton, in a low voice

"Therefore when you took this photograph at one o'clock it was not yet high water, the tide was still coming in?'

If high water was at one-fifty it must have been '

Then why, John Stapleton cried Vickers, in a terrible voice, "is it going out in that photograph? You can see the swirl of the water against the tree."

For what seemed an eternity did the man in the box stand there mouthing and one could have heard a pin drop in the court Then came a sudden shout of 'Stop him" but it was too late Stapleton had cheated the hangman And maybe as a point in his favour he confessed before he died.

The motive—who can tell?" said Ronald as we waited for lunch at Davidson's house 'But it was a devilish clever crime, though not quite clever enough. Somehow or other Stapleton must have known that Stern and Yarrow had had a row Somehow or other he must have known that Stern left Yarrow a little before half-past two The photograph which sealed his fate was probably taken to foster the idea that he and Yarrow were friends. And he forgot about high tide If you remember, Davidson, it was just on the turn two days later at three-thirty Now it gets about fifty minutes later every day so that on the day of the murder high tide was an hour and forty minutes earlier—at one-fifty His one slip But as to motive. . ."

He shrugged his shoulders, and at that moment the butler announced Mr Briggs

"Won't keep you a moment, gentlemen' he said, 'but there's just one point you might like to know I thought no more about it till the trial to-day At twenty-past two on the day Mr Yarrow was murdered, someone rang Stapleton up at my house '

"Who?' said Ronald

'Mrs Yarrow

# ACROSTICS

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No 234.

Veni, vidi, vici. He
Liked not men too lean to be.

1. A rebel, but O bite him not
2. To arm a stiffener we've got
3. Stone walls, he said, no prison make
4. The Thames an alias must take
5. When drops are heavy, put it up.
6. A firm supporter of the cup.

BOODLE BAR.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 239.

In this endeavour
Just to carry on
Luck seems worse than ever.
Hope is nearly gone.
You are sadly weighing
What best to be at.
Heed the old-time saying.
Do the thing that's flat.
Lastly, let me make it clear
Anagrams are wanted here.

1. From fireplace that which tells of marbles frame.
2. A pace. Twist imputation of mistake.
3. Old instrument derive from ancient game
4. A drum. Transform a measure for its sake.
5. Mix up reban a magistrate to name.
6. Roamy deposit change be fib to make
7. Implied from room. The letters are the same

SILEX

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 237

Thyrsis well may lure
The epicure
And maid demure

1. For ill-starred boats a dark and dread abyss.
2. Boundless indeed, if bounty is given to this.
3. She gives to simple men their due reward
4. As seen upon the hearth or tented sward.
5. Neither superior nor inferior seems,
6. Poetic epithet for Cynthia's beams
7. House of it rises from the watery scene
8. The sweetest nymph is here who lives unseen.
9. Thus fasten, and contentment you may glean.

W. J. B

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | H | ac stro | M |
| 2. | I | ?s m | a |
| 3. | N | e m e s i | S |
| 4. | C | r e k e | T |
| 5. | E | q u a | L |
| 6. | P | a | E |
| 7. | a | s l e | T |
| 8. | E | c h | O |
| 9. | S | o c e a r | E |

NOTES.—Light 2. Admirable. 7 and 9. Two words also one word. 8. Milton. Comus

# WRONG FOOT FORWARD

OSMAR E. WHITE

ILLUSTRATED BY COLLER

THE sleet clouds had poured themselves through the narrow passes of Balmat in wisps and eddies of grey. Gaujard saw them grouping themselves in masses of sullen, icy vapour against the high peaks as he led his party from the faint moraine track to the hut under the shelter of Arête de Carrier. But with sunset there had come a freezing wind from the high snows of Mont Maudit and the guide's face had cleared. He knew that the morning would be fine, even though the gale whined all night in the valley and cased the rock-faces in a film of bluish ice.

It was late autumn, and a breath of wind had come out of the north, stilling the voice of the stream deep in the crevasse to an icy tinkling, and hardening the snow, so that the boom and roar of mid-day avalanches had become less frequent. A fine season for the sport.

Miles Terhune shivered a little as a gust battered a volley of ice-particles against the thick walls of the shelter, and drew the fire roaring up the chimney. It was a strange and disturbing business, this meeting with Morley, whom he had last seen in the cold, bleak room at the Yard, rattling harsh questions in machine-gun-like bursts.

Was it mere chance that he had come to l'Auberge Gessin which the tourists seldom found? Terhune had little belief in significant coincidence. The odds against a chance meeting were very, very long—thousands to one. If he had not planned the thing so perfectly, and executed it so faultlessly the odds would have been a million to one. Yet it was said that a man always made some trivial slip—some obvious error. He knew that he had made none—yet why was Morley so interested in his performances as a member of the club? Why had he been so painstaking to cultivate a casual friendship? Why—last and most of all—had he been so keen to accompany him on the season's last ascent of Dent de Chien?

Terhune watched the big man tilt water from a hissing kettle into the cups. He was no fool, that fellow for all his overgrown body and the rugged Irish face, bronzed, now, by the firelight. His eyes were not only humorous, they were shrewd with the habit of observing. His head was the head of a man with an imagination. After all, imagination was the only thing which Terhune had feared in this past year.

Who would have imagined it possible to traverse that rough wall of stone, from ledge to ledge and buttress to buttress, with the concrete of the courtyard a hundred and twenty feet below in the darkness? Who would have considered it possible to turn the corner of a wall, three storeys up, over four feet of smooth sandstone block? Only a man who knew what trained muscles and a trained head could do—and call it sport.

Why, that corner was almost as difficult as the twelve metres on l'Aiguille Peccard where that poor devil of a Norwegian had put the wrong foot forward and one could still see his camera lying on a ledge, three hundred feet down.

Terhune took the proffered coffee with a word of thanks, stirring the syrupy liquid

*"I'm very much afraid that the same who did for old Harding is safe in bed," said Morley, looking at the man lying on the low bunk.*

with a pewter teaspoon. "You know Morley" he said, stilling the quiver of nerves in him, "you're the first copper I ever knew who was keen on Alpine work. Chasing burglars and mountaineering don't seem to go together, do they?"

Morley grinned, puffing at an old black pipe contentedly. "Oh, I don't know," he said, lazily. "When I'm climbing I have to forget that I'm a Robert. Perhaps that's why I always spend my leave either round here or in the Oberland. But besides, when I was a kiddy, home in Donegal, I once saw a travelling showman climb the outside of a church steeple—and was so paralyzed with excitement and fear that the idea of climbing it myself, to see if I had the nerve, obsessed me. Even the thrashing the old man gave me, when I'd satisfied myself, never quite killed the thrill. It's a natural talent, I daresay."

Terhune laughed outright. He, too, liked the sport because he was fundamentally afraid of it. Very vain of his fairmindedness, Terhune said to himself deliberately: "I like Morley. I'm damned if I don't."

The man was making some casual comment on the reputation of Dent de Chien.

"They say that Coin d'Aveugle—Blind Man's Corner—has stopped even crack members of the Berne Section."

Terhune nodded. Morley puffed in silence for a minute. "You know," he went on suddenly, "the west face doesn't look possible from a distance of a few miles, does it?"

Terhune shook his head.

"And it wouldn't be possible for anyone but a trained man—a man whose technique was sound and whose head was perfect. The average fellow, say a Londoner, would be willing to lay you long odds that it couldn't be climbed."

Terhune's nerves were taut, his heart thumping. The big Irishman was looking directly at him.

"You fool," said Terhune, deep down within himself. "Do you think you'll shake me—get anything out of me by that sort of talk?"

Aloud he voiced some nonchalant agreement. Morley was still watching him, sipping contemplatively at the scalding coffee in his cup. Then he said, chuckling a little: "Quite by the way, Terhune, you and I didn't meet in the most fortunate circumstances, did we?"

Terhune steadied the slightest of shivers in the hand which held the pannikin before replying.

"You mean that dirty business about—who was it? Harding, the diamond buyer. Well"—he laughed—"not exactly fortunate, I'll admit. No. If I remember rightly, you spluttered. I gathered you wanted me to admit killing the old fellow in some miraculous way. Once I felt like obliging you—almost. You were so damned serious and persistent about it."

Morley frowned.

"I never splutter," he said, aggrievedly. "And it was serious. Anyway, I wanted to apologize for that cross-examination—unofficially."

Terhune allowed himself to laugh. Old tactics, these—confidence and friendship stuff. What was the damned man after?

"No need to apologize," he said, shortly. "Spluttering may be a part of your job, for all I know; and it is unreasonable to have a grudge against a man for doing his job. Er—hope I'm not tactless, but are you people at the Yard any farther ahead with that case?"

Morley shook his head thoughtfully.

"Very little," he admitted.

"Have you found out how it was done—how the murderer slipped the liftman?"

"If we could find out how it was done," said Morley, grimly, "we'd be well on the way towards finding out who did it. Naturally, we tackle the thing from the point of view of *motive* first—underlying motive. We even considered the possibility of *your* having a finger in the pie until it became known that you were worth something like £50,000. There was no earthly reason why you should murder a man for eighteen hundred pounds worth of diamonds. Besides, it was problematical whether or not you knew anything about his having the stones, even though you had been talking together during the day."

A MAN with an imagination! Did he know that Mr. Marano had dropped forty-three because of that garbled cable version of the inspector's report? Did he know that *he*, Terhune, had been a penniless defaulter when 'Change closed, and worth £50,000 when it opened—the moment *after*? Or was he bluffing?

Then there was the liftman," Morley continued ruminatively. "He swore he was in the hall all the time and that he heard nothing. He denied that anyone had passed down the corridor between seven-thirty and the time when Harding's partner came and the discovery was made. That is as may be. The man may have dropped off to sleep. Anyway, we checked his story. Apart from that, there's no human being made with the callous nerve to sit calmly reading within fifty feet of a man he had murdered. He'd have done something—discovered something. Given the show away. Still, entry could only have been made to Harding's office by way of

the door, unless the murderer flew—maybe——"

He paused.

"Go on," said Terhune, smiling sardonically. "Go on."

"You were the only other person in the office block—you and the two typists working in your outer office. They swore, independently, that you were working on tape readings in your own room from the time that you arrived until the discovery was made. That lets *you* out, apart from motive."

Morley had exhausted all possibilities save one—the traverse of the outer wall from window to window, by a man whose technique was sound and whose head was perfect.

"Then you're beaten."

"Not beaten—but as damned near as matters. Still, I've been wondering."

He paused again.

"Wondering. Yes?"

"About the window."

A tiny trickle of coffee dribbled down Terhune's chin. He wiped it away with the back of his hand.

"How?"

Morley, looking up, saw only shadowy interest on the face of the man lying on the low bunk.

"Oh, nothing," he said. "Merely one of the few hundred useless ideas I get from time to time. I'm very much afraid that the swine who did for old Harding is safe in bed."

Terhune's eyes flickered.

"A great pity, old man," he said gently. "But I suppose even detective-sergeants are human. Forget about it."

So they talked of rocks they had climbed and, after the lamp was turned out, lay watching the queer play of firelight on the ceiling, each busy with his own thoughts and listening to the high, cold whistle of the wind in the crevasses.

Gaujard was snoring regularly now. His damp boots, newly oiled, were steaming by the stone fireplace. Terhune commenced watching them, but saw ugly pictures in the fire behind—flickering out of the deepening pile of embers under the logs. All the while he was trying subconsciously, to determine the position of the other man without raising his head. Thinking. Strange, how one's brain wandered on, independent of the will. It was impossible to keep still in this damnable state of uncertainty.

Morley's quiet voice broke the stillness. The wind was dead for the moment.

"What's wrong?"

Terhune clenched his hands.

"Nothing," he replied, softly. "only this cursed wind. I can't sleep. It howls so."

"Neither can I. I've been thinking."

Silence.

"I've got an idea. I've been thinking about the Harding case. Terhune. The fellow who did the business *must* have got through the window. He must have—have traversed from one window to the other since the wall from the courtyard to the first window-ledge is sheer."

Terhune lay back. There could be no shadow of doubt. Morley knew.

"Perhaps," he said, with a casualness which he knew was futile, "perhaps. But you're supposed to be on a holiday. Forget about it."

"Good night," said Morley quietly.

"Good night."

Then, when silence had fallen again, Terhune saw, in his mind's eye, for the first time, the figure of an old man with a reading glass bent over the unfolded sheets of a newspaper.

A LITTLE after three o'clock Gaujard lighted a lantern. Morley awakened to find him siccing bacon into the iron frying-pan. Terhune roused stiffly from his bunk when he heard the others and bid them a brief good morning. His eyes were very tired by staring at the firelight. It seemed as though they were insufficiently moistened and that there were grains of sand under the lids. Mentally, too, he was weary—disgusted.

He had believed that he was different. That he was logical. Now, that first fellow in field grey who leapt like a rabbit when the bullet caught him, spilling the stew from the dixie as he tumbled into the communication trench—why had he never regretted killing *him*? Or the others—the wounded boy in the shell hole drinking water from his round field-cap?

Was Harding different from them? Most likely those others had begotten children, or their womenfolk would mourn for them. Harding had nothing but his money. His wealth had not been the wealth of moral protection or of love.

Morley was lacing his boots, stretching and rolling the heavy sock tops, winding the puttees about his thick, white legs.

They ate breakfast in silence and went out on to the old snow with the first grey of false dawn in the sky. The sleet clouds had passed and the stars were out, burning palely and mistily. Gaujard walked ahead along the moraine track, swinging the lantern.

"I spent a rotten night," the big man complained, striding out energetically to loosen his stiff muscles. "Got to thinking

and somehow couldn't stop myself. Have you ever run that way?"

Jerbie was gravely silent.

"At the end of the last breath I was running with the wind! Don't ever run that way, Jerbie. Promise me. Some day I'll show you how. Some day we'll run together. Mother says I must not run very fast yet.

"Mother said that the air was best and we stayed [illegible] to breathe it. [illegible] turning to Jerbie.

Jerbie looked at the oval black-green ice [illegible] he said:

"I said [illegible] yet," he said [illegible]. Mr. Morley [illegible] Mr. Morley. [illegible] Mr. Morley. We don't want [illegible] yet."

[illegible] Jerbie [illegible] There had been the first [illegible] yet [illegible] need [illegible] of [illegible] What purpose [illegible] Nobody had told him. That was Morley's [illegible]

*The guide's face was flushed and angry "No doubt Mr Morley will understand that the accident was not deliberate," said Terhune.*

The going was hard among the loose ice and glacier-worn rock. The snowfield had been encrusted with frost overnight. Its discoloured surface was steep and slippery. Morley fastened the pale, greased cord about his waist and held the knots up for inspection. Lanjard nodded approval and commenced chipping shallow steps in the bank with his iron. Morley deliberately slid a [illegible] about his [illegible] enough," he said. [illegible] dependability of the English hemp strong enough for half-a-dozen men to hang by.

He threw the slack end to Terhune and stood, sliding the supple staff about his hand and smiling. Terhune said nothing. Morley looked at him, questioningly.

"Feeling fit?" he asked.

"Quite," said Terhune, meeting the cold, grey eyes [illegible] "Fit for anything."

"Bad Morley," smile as he turned away.

In five minutes they were off across the gentle slope, a dozen steps at a time, twelve feet of red streaked hemp between each toiling figure. Terhune heard Morley's regular footsteps behind him, "one, two,

three . . . pause," ringing on the frost-crust like bootsoles on a pavement at night.

When four hundred yards had been traversed, the snow levelled and became softer. Sunrise had come and the frost crystals were all agint. The snow-streaked point of Dent de Chien four thousand feet above them, was stained with pale splashes of rose.

Where the last, outlying bay of the glacier bit into the mountain-side they came upon a deep crevasse. The water was running in its depths, splashing over ledges with a sound like broken glass. Terhune looked long and deeply into the bluish darkness. Those walls of ice, he recollected, were moving two feet each year, grinding marks upon the face of basalt, eight hundred feet down. Grinding the scars with infinite slowness, but grinding fine. A symbol, perhaps, of more vital things. He strode over the rotten ice-bridge, a most carelessly.

Gaujard was sitting in a last year's drift with his feet braced, frowning. Gaujard discouraged carelessness. It was his profession.

CLIMBERS approach the west face of Dent de Chien by way of an old, exposed, scoria ridge. It is loose, grey stuff into which the feet sink deeply and the pebbles, as they are dislodged, rustle down out of sight seemingly away into the very depths of the valley.

Terhune looked back from the crest. Morley's face was flushed and damp. He was breathing heavily.

"Lord! But what a pipe-opener. The lungs up, now. Doesn't the old tooth smile pleasantly?"

Morley jerked a hand at the peak. Terhune glanced at the ragged tongues of rock above his head. Saw the shimmer of snow in dark crevices, the high loneliness of the summit, holding out its everlasting challenge and its promise. There was a sudden surge of warmth in his heart, for he loved these high places almost as though they were personalities. He loved the sting from old snow—the hard, calculating effort of conquest. Freedom, too. It was a fine, desirable thing, this business of living. Perhaps old Haruno. No, that was done with—even with Morley's feet still crunching in the pebbles behind him. It was done with.

At nine o'clock Gaujard came out upon the shoulder of the arête. The valley below was clear. Looking east, one could see the peaks of Aiguille de Goutier and Mont Maudit and the Dôme of Mont Blanc, standing out like teeth in the jaws of the high Alps, the sheen of the Glacier des Bossons and Mer de Glace. Westward the pale blue of a lake was shining and the sun had fringed its margins with gold.

Gaujard coiled his ropes methodically as he spoke the old, hackneyed formula of the guides about "the greatest of care messieurs. . . *la corde* . . . a margin of safety" and so forth.

Terhune nodded to his few questions absently. Morley was wiping his face with a khaki pocket handkerchief and examining the first face of rock to be scaled with an appraising eye. He moved to the approach with brisk confidence, climbing with the effortless ease of much experience and the balance of a man suited by nature to his sport. Terhune, bitterly critical, could do no more than put his feet in the crannies or on the ledges which the other man had used.

Gaujard was following them phlegmatically but full of a secret admiration for Morley's deliberate confidence. Of a certainty, this approach was not easy. It would be interesting to see how the pair tackled the next traverse—and Cou d'Aveugle. That last piece was hard climbing—one of the rare places where one could only remember footholds and not look for them. The drop sheer on to the shoulder of the arête was a little over seven hundred feet—and the look down into the valley, more than three thousand.

Only four years ago had Leblanc, of the Hotel Metropole, and Cobley, the Englishman, found that the last traverse was possible. That little fellow, Terhune was going at his rocks too carelessly, expending a shade too little effort with a shade too much confidence. He was not bothering to test handholds. What was wrong? A sound man, usually too.

Gaujard wondered if it was the competitive spirit—jealousy. He had sensed a strain between those two, this morning. It was becoming even more noticeable.

"Pass, m'sieu," he called, warningly. "Some of the rock is not safe after frost."

Terhune clambered on to the shelf where Morley was resting, and looked back at the climbing guide.

"Well?" he asked. "What now?"

Gaujard pointed to the oblique ledge running upwards to the next snow-slope. Its polished surface was encased in a film of melting ice.

"Traverse, m'sieu," he said crisply. "We will use two ropes. M'sieu Morley will take the hoist. The belay is over a small rock beyond the patch of moss. Thank you. A little more of the strain—easy."

He moved up the narrow way and adjusted the hemp with great care. Morley leaned back with his feet braced in a cranny. Terhune was taking it too fast. Once his feet slipped the fraction of an inch, but the

managed to take a firmer handhold before his weight came [illegible] the rope. Gaujard's face was flooded in a grey [illegible] waited [illegible] Morley had [illegible] without [illegible] and [illegible] to the [illegible] man.

I cannot [illegible] to assert [illegible] whether the guide of [illegible] rope had [illegible] been done with [illegible] or de [illegible] [illegible] are possible. Fortunately [illegible] was [illegible] Above desperate business, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

"[illegible] you are making [illegible] of a [illegible] mistake, Gaujard," he said, sneering

*Morley saw the slender white fingers quiver "Easy," said Gaujard from above "Go back, m'sieu, you have the wrong foot"*

"But no doubt Mr Morley will understand that the accident was not [illegible]"

Morley frowned. Was this an apology?

"It [illegible] matters," Terhune under his breath. "You *know*—and you haven't batted an eyelid!"

Gaujard turned abruptly, working along the deep-cleft margin of a ledge-drift. His alpenstock picked monotonously at every useful crevice. Terhune was ignoring them defiantly, trusting solely to his balance and one free hand.

By noon they had come, breathless, on to the last of the overhanging, broken ridges of the peak. For hours Gaujard had led his sportsmen, flylike, higher and higher on the shattered rim of the precipice. Here the air was better with the dry coldness of the upper air currents. Morley was conscious of a hot, soft hand racing round and round his chest. His ears were singing a shrill, locust song. The gulf below was tugging on his shoulders with the weight of a thousand ghostly threads—threatening to draw him outwards and down, should he relax for as much as a second. His eyes searched out every foot and handhold with desperate exactness, he used them with an infinite, sure caution.

Once he looked down and then stood stock still, while the dizzy sparks of vertigo raced over his field of vision and a sickness rose up in his stomach. It was not that his head was weak, but eleven thousand feet of altitude make a difference when one's feet are nine inches from eternity.

"Do not look down, messieurs," drawled Gaujard. "There is no hurry. Find your head. Now, then. We are on the arête west of the former angle of ascent. This they call 'Corn d'Aveugle,' because you cannot trust your head to look down at the footholds. Remember them. There are five metres of the rock traverse, then one climbs beneath the cornice. *Voila!* The broken crevice which runs upward? You see it? It is the first foothold. The left foot first and change to the right. Then put the left hand on the clear rock which you may see [illegible] to gradually to the right. It is easy. I will then place the belay for Monsieur Terhune and Monsieur Morley will take the double turn, leaving to me the stock-rope. You are confident, messieurs? *Bien*—then there will be no difficulty. But do *not* look down."

Morley felt the sickness pass as suddenly as it had risen—but come again, as he [illegible] the black, ragged tongues of rock, the ribbon of the glacier, the smudge of fir, the bright streak which marked Mer de Glace. How long would it take a man to get down if ——. He daren't think of that now. Terhune was speaking to him—whose face was greyly pale and whose lips moved woodenly. The time had come. With it the first and second fits of dizziness passed. He grinned at Terhune.

"Go on, Terhune. You can do it all right, you know!"

Gaujard was grunting as his spiked feet [illegible] the holds. The man's back was impassive. His thick, brown fingers were clamped, vice-like, over a corner of dark rock. Left foot, change to right. Morley lousily he was on the higher ledge, reaching up, hand over hand.

Then Terhune turned, his eyes blazing.

"Why did you come, Morley? Why?"

Morley heard his voice as from a distance.

"Don't talk rot," he snapped, suddenly. "Get on with it, man, unless you're afraid I'm cold!"

Left foot, change to right—or right to left, which?

Morley saw the slender, white fingers quiver.

"Why did you come? You knew!"

"Easy," said Gaujard, from above. "Go back, monsieur, you have the wrong foot. *Bon Dieu!*"

But the white fingers were gone, and Morley pitched forward as the rope tautened. Mer de Glace was very bright and the firs dark, deep down where the haze was dimming the green of the valley.

"NO," said Detective-Sergeant Morley. "I didn't enjoy my holiday. Don't you ever read newspapers, Super?"

The smile faded from the Superintendent's face.

"Awfully sorry, Morley," he said, contritely. "I had forgotten for the moment what with one thing and another. How did it happen?"

"God knows," said Morley, his face a little pale with the recollection. "I had the safety rope—and he changed feet. Half a minute more and the guide would have rigged a belay for him. But that's always the way. Even then, we had a chance of getting him, for I found a firm handhold and stopped slipping. Yet he—he cut the rope, poor, gallant devil! Don't talk of it, Super [illegible]."

Then he stopped and said, after a moment's silence:—

"While I was away, I worked out a fair theory about that Harding case. Where was Campbell—the man we had to let go in the St Albans case? He used to be a steeplejack. . . ."

# THE CORRECT KIT

## LORD DUNSANY

*Illustrated by JAMES SHORT*

OURS is a small club, but one day with some idea of the committee that we should make ourselves a little more important, we unfortunately arranged a big dinner. White ties, speeches, and all the rest of it. At least that was the idea of the committee. White ties we actually had, but the speeches never came off, for in the end we sat listening instead to one of those tales of Jorkens. He, looking round at us all in our starched shirts, had suddenly said: "It reminds me of a cannibal feast I once attended in Africa."

Everyone laughed at that, including me, though I saw no particular point in it. And then Terbut said: "Not quite so many white ties, I should imagine."

And we all laughed with Terbut.

When the laughter was over, and Terbut was still smiling quietly to himself, Jorkens began his story.

"Up the Nile, till it loses its name and becomes the White Nile, and into Lake No, and out of that into the Bahr el Gazel I went once about as far as the Bahr el Arab. I had left the Sahara Desert far behind me, I had left that little piece of English civilization that has been transplanted in Khartoum, and a few hundred miles of the White Nile and a lake like a heated opal and the papyrus swamps, and had come to firm ground at last, and the scarlet trunks of trees and mimosa with its small round yellow flowers shining in the sun, as the sun itself might shine on the planet Neptune. When I saw all this good firm land I decided to leave my dahabeah and go South for a couple of days, in order to stretch my legs as much as anything, and in the hope of getting a couple of pairs of tusks, which would about pay for my trip if they were big enough. And all the elephant tracks I had seen seemed to be leading south. So I took two men and a couple of donkeys and a light camping outfit, and I travelled South for two days without seeing an elephant.

On the morning of the third day I was walking along with one Arab, who was carrying my double .470, about a mile from my camp. I was still in the Dinka country, a people I knew quite well, who always struck me as harmless, naked except for grey ash they rubbed into their skins, a blue necklace, and a feather in their hair, the grey ash is to keep off mosquitoes.

I was walking along with this Arab, when suddenly I saw to the right and left a number of men with spears who were hurrying away in front of me. Strange though they were to me (and what is strange out there is usually dangerous), they seemed in such a hurry at first to get out of my way that I let valuable seconds go by before I reached for my rifle, not that I could have done anything against over eighty of them and before I could say knife the two lots met about a hundred yards in front of me, and looking back I saw that I was completely surrounded. Eighty-five men with spears, of a tribe that I did not know, and every one of them in evening dress.

"You mean," said one of us, "they were a bit décolleté."

"No," said Jorkens. "Evening dress."

"Then what kind of evening dress does a savage wear?" said Terbut.

"White ties, white waistcoats," said Jorkens, quietly. "In fact, just what you are wearing now, except that they had

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rather heavier watch-chains, and they all wore diamond solitaires.

"It was no good shooting, they were all round me. I gave up my rifle to the first man that came for it, it looked odd in his hands against his evening dress. Of course I did a good deal of thinking, and the first thing I thought was that I need hardly expect the worst, because, however nasty the spears looked anything like cannibalism was impossible in decent evening dress, such as they were all wearing. I was wrong there.

"I saw they weren't Dinkas, but they'd come into Dinka country, and I wondered if they knew the Dinka language. I tried it and they did.

They were taking me to their camp, where we soon arrived as I knew we should for their evening dress was so neat and tidy that it could not have been long put on. And it had not been often put on, one could see that too. Then why had it been put on now? Obviously for some ceremonial occasion. But what?

There was no longer any doubt of the occasion when we came to the middle of their camp. There hung a cauldron that would have held two pigs. A fire was already burning underneath it, and others, also in evening dress, were adding buckets of water to the cauldron as the water that was already in it boiled. I saw then what was prepared for me: it was nothing less than boiling. I don't know that boiling is really any worse than roasting, but somehow we seem to be more familiar with roasting, we are taught about roasting when we are young, when first we are told of Hell and, knocking about the world as I have done, and getting warned now and then, by people who seem to know, that one is getting nearer to it, one is more inclined to face roasting. But boiling seems to me still an idea one could never get used to.

"And now I noticed they were all

*"I burst out laughing and pointed at the white ties that these men had bought from the trader."*

straightening their ties and I saw that I must do something pretty quick, or I should be boiled whether I fancied it or not. Well, I talked to their chief man then, in Dinka talk that they knew through trading with Dinkas. What was the cauldron for? For I pretended not to know. But that was no good. Then I asked him if he didn't know that eating men was wrong and that the white man punished people that ate men.

"'Ah, the white man. Great man,' he said.

'He teaches you not to eat men,' I answered.

White man can do no wrong, he said.

'Well, sometimes perhaps. Just now and then but not often I said. For I thought I was getting along swimmingly

Not when he is in evening dress,' said the savage

'DO you know in about five minutes then I got his horrible point of view The white man, he explained, was often angry, often hasty often wrong, but in this ceremonial kit, his evening dress, he could not err! I suppose we have a few tenets of that kind, but, suddenly hearing it like that, it seemed to me perfectly frightful They had got this kit from a trader who had sold the suits to them for gold and ivory They knew it was the white man's most important dress, and they had the perfectly horrible idea that it sanctified anything That was why they had put it on

Now what chance had I? The boiling water was deep in the cauldron, and they were dancing round it already with their heavy gold watch-chains flapping It was no good saying any more against cannibalism, it was clearly one of those things that are wrong without a ceremony, but that a ceremony makes all right Never at any moment of my life, did I feel less like laughter than then. But I burst out laughing. I don't like interfering with any man's faith, especially his faith in a white man. But I burst out laughing and pointed at the white ties that these men had bought from the trader

'You laugh?' said their chief man, simply

'Yes, I said, at those ties.' And I pretended to try to stop my laughter and laughed again

Not correct evening dress?' he asked, quickly, like a bride being married in a church that isn't properly licensed

No, no, no,' I said

What wrong?' he asked

'Why, those ties,' I said, they should go on the shoes and the bows that you wear on your shoes should go on your collars' And I began laughing again

" He hesitated, and I suddenly remembered a tiresome photograph of a group at a dinner that I had attended in London, the photographer had come round afterwards and got signatures from us, ordering a copy just at that time of the evening when one isn't so sure what one's signing, and the damned photograph had reached me at Khartoum, of all places, and I had stuffed it into a pocket in my tent. I suddenly remembered it now, and we had all been wearing black ties. Of course, our feet weren't showing.'

" But ' began Terbut

'Don't you *see*," said Jorkens, 'that it proved my point, that the black bows on the shoes should be worn on the collar? Of course, some more of the swine had raided my camp, and they had brought the whole outfit in. I soon had hold of that photograph and it did far more than my limited knowledge of Dinka talk could do And then I was taking off their ties and cutting them all in half, and tying the halves round their feet with a bit of a bow just where their toes joined on, and I was only just able to make one, and the bows of their shoes I fastened on to their collar studs, doing it as quickly and boldly as though I did it every day of my life, and handing each man the spare bow, to wear on Sundays. And then I walked away and my two Arabs came with me'

You walked away?' said Terbut.

" Yes,' said Jorkens, and that was the last I saw of them

" Why didn't they catch you again?' he asked

'Couldn't walk fast enough,' said Jorkens

Why didn't they run?' persisted Terbut But he got no change out of Jorkens

You try to run," he said, " with the ends of your shoes tied round with evening ties. The ties will come off. And they daren't do anything without their evening dress Lots of people are like that. If it comes to that, you were once invited to dine at the Mansion House

'I was, said Terbut full of dignity

" And I doubt if you'd have dared to go in any kit but the right one,"

" Well——" said Terbut

'Exactly said Jorkens, " Turtle or man, it's all the same

And the talk degenerated into a discussion as to what was the proper wear for a variety of meals and occasions.

# APPROACH BIDS *in* CONTRACT BRIDGE

COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE

LAST month an outline of instructions was given to guide the Auction player in taking up Contract. First of all the beginner should learn the values of high cards so as to be able to bid on values and not on fancy. A list of these values was given, and it is proposed now to explain the principles governing the founding of bids on values. The more conservative values called Quick Tricks, were shown separately last month from other high-card values to emphasize the importance of using these values, and these only, for original bids. After the original bid has been made the situation is not quite the same, and the subsequent bidding can be founded on all high-card values irrespective of whether they are the more solid Quick Tricks values such as K Q = 1 or the less sound values such as K J x = 1 or K x plus Q x in different suits) = 1.

There is for each *original* bid a minimum standard of Quick-Trick strength, and there is also a minimum standard of high-card strength for each *subsequent* bid, with the single exception of an assisting bid in which case support may be given on playing tricks only. After a partner's bid of (say) One Heart, a raise to even Four Hearts may be given on a freakish hand full of ruffing values, etc., but nearly devoid of high-card values. A raise or assisting bid (*i.e.* a further bid in the *same* suit) is the exception to the rule that bids should be founded on a certain standard of high-card strength.

The Auction player who wishes to become proficient in Contract should learn the values which justify the bid he proposes to make in every bidding situation. It is not a very difficult task. If he learns the values for a dozen bids this will carry him a very long way.

### The Approach Bid

The most important bid of all is, of course, the Approach bid. Experience has shown that the most successful system of bidding is the Approach method. It is a losing policy to rush into high bids. The minimum bid which can be made in a particular situation is nearly always the best. Success can only be achieved in Contract by the interchange during bidding of the fullest information between the partners. This can only be done by economizing bids. For this reason the full value of a hand is not shown immediately in a bid. To

do no would raise the bidding too high and rob the partners of a chance of finding the best declaration. Contract has taught us that the best declaration is often not the most obvious one. It can only be found safely by slow 'Approach' methods. The usual example is the case where seasoned Contract players show guards in the various suits preparatory to making a game bid in No Trumps. The Auction minded player opens with a bid of One No Trump, which his partner raises to Two No Trumps. He then bids Three No Trumps, and fails in his contract because opponents make five tricks in one suit. The Approach method of making informative bids in suits would have discovered the missing suit and would have found a successful game bid in a suit as soon as it was evident that a guard in some suit was missing.

### Valuation for Approach Bids

Nothing is clearer in the history of the evolution of Contract bidding than that the slow Approach method of bidding is the winning way. Approach bids are made in the first and second round of bidding. After that it is usually necessary to "force" the situation to keep the bidding open. For-cing" means jumping the bidding one step more than necessary in a suit. This is done when the values held give the promise of a game. A signal is then necessary to keep the bidding from closing before a game call is reached. The minimum values on which Approach bids are based are as follows: 1) 2½ Quick Tricks for an (approach) opening bid of "One." (2) 1½ High-Card tricks for a partner's (approach) support bid, and (3) an additional ½ of a High-Card trick for a further (approach) bid by either partner. This is a good general guide, but not an absolute guide, for it is subject to slight modification according to the strength of the hand. The original bidder's hand or the supporting hand may have a very strong distribution, in which case the normal minimum high-card strength can be shaded down slightly. An original bid may, for example, be made on 2 Quick Tricks only in the case of a two-suit hand such as Spades Q, J, 10, x, x, Hearts K, 10, 9, x, x Diamonds A, J Clubs x. After this hand in distribution (but not in high-card strength), to Spades Q, J, 10, x Hearts K, 10, 9, x Diamonds A, J Clubs x, x, x, and it is too weak for an opening bid. The values for a support bid may similarly be shaded. After the partner's bid of One Club a support bid of One Spade may be given on Spades K, 10, 9, x, x Hearts 10, 9, x, Diamonds Q, 10, 9, x Clubs J but should not normally be given on Spades K, 10, 9, x, x Hearts x, 9, x, Diamonds Q, 10, 9 Clubs J, x.

Where a hand has useful cards of intermediate value (Knaves, Tens, Nines, and a favourable distribution, it is usual to risk shading values slightly for bids, but the beginner will be well advised to leave the shading of values severely alone until he has made some progress.

### The Biddable Suit

Approach bids are made on biddable suits only. They should not be made on three-card suits. Biddable suits are four-card suits headed by 1½ high-card tricks or five-card suits headed by ½ of a high-card trick or longer suits of any strength.

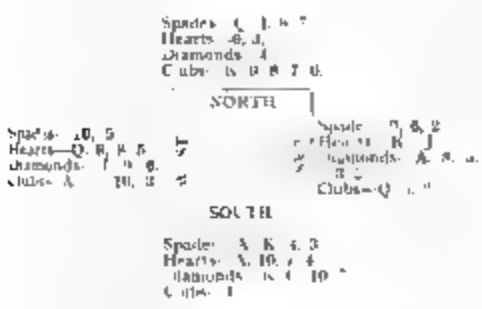
Such is the increasing preference given to Approach bids in suits over (uninformative) No Trump bids that it is customary to bid on shaded values rather than miss the chance of showing strength in as many suits as possible. It is quite usual to bid on A, J, x, x instead of on the orthodox minimum for a four-card suit of A, J, 10, x. Similarly it is now quite usual to bid on Q, 10, 9, x, x or J, 10, 9, x, x, instead of on the orthodox minimum for a five-card suit of Q, J, [illegible].

While beginners are warned against shading values in the hand generally, it is different in the case of a suit. A shaded bid on values in a suit can be made with safety on a strong hand. The stronger the hand the greater the permissible shading in the suit.

The beginner least of all can afford to miss chances by not making informative bids on shaded values in suits. He should acquire the habit early of making these bids. There is one danger however, with them. They should be made very sparingly in *major* suits. A shaded bid in a minor suit may be the only way of getting into a successful game bid in No Trumps. Minor suits are less likely to be taken seriously for the final declaration as a five-trick contract is usually too difficult. It is different with major suits. They are taken seriously and may be given preference to No Trumps as the safer way to game. They should consequently be bid only on sound values. If there is any shading in a major suit it should be very slight and the outside strength in the hand should fully offset the shading. The foregoing covers the ground of Approach bids and the values on which they are based. There are many other bids some of which will be discussed next month.

### The Play of a Hand in Defence

The following example of interesting play of a hand occurred during the recent Duplicate match in Amsterdam between Crockford's Club, London and the Corin-

nental Club, Amsterdam. The cards had been dealt by North as follows —

The bidding by both competitors reached a game call of Four Spades, and in both rooms West's opening lead was a small trump. North (dummy) took the trick and led the singleton Diamond. East in both rooms did not put up the Ace but played a small Diamond. What should South now play? The Dutch South finessed against the Knave by playing the 10. West got the lead and led another trump. The contract was really defeated at this stage by this lead of a trump. The declarer had no longer enough trumps for cross ruffing. The Crockford's South played differently. He did not finesse the 10 of Diamonds, but played the Queen of Diamonds winning the trick and then led his singleton 4 of Clubs. The Dutch West took the trick with the Ace of Clubs and then led a small Heart thereby losing his chance of defeating the contract. He should have led a trump. The lead of a small Heart gave the declarer the chance to make his contract. He took the trick with the Ace of Hearts and proceeded to cross-ruff and made ten tricks. His trumps with one exception took tricks separately. This is the outstanding feature in the play. In the other room the defensive play of the hand was much stronger. West led a second round of trumps when he got the lead with the Knave of Diamonds after South had finessed the 10. The Dutch South took the trick and led the King of Diamonds. West played a small Diamond and South ran the King, believing that West must have the Ace, seeing that East had not played the Ace on the singleton Diamond when led in the earlier round. East took the King with the Ace of Diamonds and led a third round of trumps. This further clashing of trumps together meant that the contract was eventually defeated by two tricks. In one room Crockford's team collected 620 points for making their contract with the North and South hands when vulnerable, and in the other won 300 points with the East and West hands for defeating the Dutch in the same contract by two tricks. Thus was a turnover 920 points on one hand due to a lead of trumps on every possible occasion when it was evident that the declarer *depended on ruffs* for his contract. Crockford's team was less lucky on some other hands, but on this hand they took the right view and realized from the start that the best defence was a lead of trumps. There are many hands on which a lead of trumps is fatal for the defence, but on many more occasions a game can be saved when trumps are led right at the beginning of play and on each later opportunity.

### An Example of Expert Bidding

The following is an example of the correct use of approach bids among experts. It occurred during the recent inter-club tournament match between the Portland Club and the Junior Carlton Club. The cards had been dealt as follows —

The bidding was as follows —

| South | West | North | East |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Club | 1 Diamond | Heart | 1 Spade |
| 2 Clubs | 2 Spades. | 3 Clubs. | Pass. |
| Pass | 3 Spades | Pass | Pass. |
| 4 Clubs | Pass | Pass | Pass. |

The Contract of Four Clubs was just made. It will be seen also that a contract of three Spades and no more can be made by the other side. The outstanding feature in the bidding is the correct slow approach method of reporting strength in the various suits and then using rebids to show length and additional strength. South made two rebids in his suit of Clubs because it was a strong six-card suit.

Note that North did not rebid his Hearts nor did West rebid his Diamonds. They were biddable but not rebiddable suits. Note also that East having once bid his Spades never rebid because he had no additional values to those shown in his first bid. Suits are not rebid unless they have sufficient length nor is a hand rebid without additional strength to that already reported in the previous bid.

# MR CRONK AT SEA

By

## W. A. DARLINGTON

MY Heavens, Cronk, old boy," said Inspector Denstone, halting just inside the door of Mr Cronk's bed-sitting-room. "You look like death!"

J. W. Cronk was sitting huddled over a fire. He raised a heavy head and looked at Denstone out of a pair of lack-lustre eyes.

"'Flu," he said, simply.

"Then you ought to be in bed."

"I've *been* in bed for a week. I've just got up." Mr Cronk groaned and added lugubriously: "I'm cured."

"It does get you down afterwards," said Denstone, sympathetically. "Well, it's plain you won't be able to do what I wanted."

"What was it?"

"Help me with a case. I need that innocent face of yours."

Mr Cronk, too far gone in lassitude to speak unnecessarily, shook his head. Denstone, his mission accomplished, fidgeted about with the normal man's desire to get out of a sickroom as quickly as is decently possible.

"Well, good-bye, old man. Hope you'll be better soon." He paused at the door. "They always say champagne and oysters is the right thing after flu. Why not treat yourself?"

"Because I'm not a millionaire," answered Mr Cronk, as the door closed.

He returned to the train of thought whose gloom Denstone's irruption had only served to intensify. He reviewed his short but eventful career as a detective, and found it wanting in any cause for satisfaction. He saw clearly that his successes had been due to luck, and that luck would be sure sooner or later to desert him. In fact, under the influence of influenza, he had temporarily lost faith in his *flair*.

"Champagne and oysters," he repeated, in derision. "What next?"

And then, suddenly, the wild thought came to him. "Why not?" He had plenty of money in the bank and nobody to spend it on but himself. If champagne and oysters would lift him out of this mood of black despair, no price within the limits of reason could be reckoned extravagant.

With the first sign of real vitality he had shown for ten days, he rose and pressed the bell for Mrs. Stubbs.

*ILLUSTRATED BY TREVER EVANS*

*"I gather that you're going ashore at Madeira with that young Williams," she said. "Don't let him lead you into mischief. He looks rather a shady character to me."*

THREE days later Denstone came back carrying a fat envelope under his arm. He walked delicately as became one entering the presence of an invalid. But it was a much-improved Cronk that he found awaiting him.

There was a gleam in the invalid's eye and a tinge of colour in his face. By his side stood an empty bottle that had recently held a pint of champagne and a plate containing oyster-shells.

"Come in, Denstone," he said, heartily. "You see, I've been taking your prescription."

Inspector Denstone eyed him not without envy.

"Seems to have worked."

"Yes, it works. But the effect wears off in an hour or two. I still get fits of depression."

"Well, seeing you've let me prescribe for you once, p'r'aps you will again. What you want's a cruise."

"A *cruise*?"

"A sea-trip, for pleasure. That'll set you up like nothing else will. 'Smatterofact, that's what I came to see you about."

Mr. Cronk shook his head.

"You seem to think I'm made of money. These cruises are beyond my pocket."

"Not if you go the one I want you to," said Denstone. "In fact, you may find it'll pay for itself and a bit over."

He spoke with an emphasis that was unmistakable.

"You mean there's a case in it?"

"I mean just that. I want you to kill two birds with the one stone—recuperate your health and do me a good turn."

"Tell me," said Mr. Cronk simply.

"Well, I was in the Haymarket this morning, and I saw a young chap I know, a young chap who goes by the name of Williams. I've had an eye on him for some time. Nice-looking lad, decent education and all that, but he's got a taste for queer company. He was coming out of one of those steamship passenger offices. He hadn't seen me, so I waited till he'd gone and dropped into the office to find out what he'd been up to. The booking-clerk hadn't put away his plans, so it was easy enough to see Williams had booked a berth on the *Peewit* for a round trip to Madeira and the Canary Islands and back."

"Aha," said Mr. Cronk, sapiently. "I see. He's going to do some card-sharping."

Denstone shook his head.

"No, he isn't. You only find card-sharpers on big luxury liners. The *Peewit*'s a cargo-boat."

"A cargo-boat? But you said—"

"Yes, I know. She's one of the Gordon Line. They're small ish steamers which ply to and from the Canaries carrying bananas chiefly. Seeing it's a nice clean cargo and a nice, sunny voyage they take passengers too. All very cheap, and very comfortable. Takes seventeen days. It's all in here." He tapped the fat envelope. "The clerk gave me a lot of handbooks and so on, when I was booking your berth."

"*My* berth?" echoed Mr. Cronk, roused to something like peevishness. Really Denstone was taking a good deal for granted.

"Well, it's your berth or nobody's. And I had to snap it up at once, or it'd have gone. You see, the *Peewit* has two-berth cabins, and your berth's the second one in the same cabin as young Williams."

"Oh, is it!" Mr. Cronk remarked more peevishly still. "Then all I can say is you'd better cancel it at once. If you think I'm going to spend seventeen days at sea shut up in a small cabin with a dangerous young crook, you're mistaken."

Denstone shook his head, and spoke in soothing tones.

"Now don't be hasty, Cronk, old boy. It's not like that at all. There's no harm in young Williams, except that he isn't straight. He wouldn't hurt a fly. Besides, I don't want you to *do* anything. Simply keep an eye on him when the ship's in port, that's all."

Mr. Cronk stuck out his lower lip obstinately, but said nothing.

"Look at it from my point of view," pleaded Denstone. "Here's young Williams going off on this round trip. He must be up to some devilment, and I want to know what. I can't spend my men's time or the public money sending anybody with him on the mere chance—after all, he may be going for his health, or because his best girl's on board. But I think not."

Mr. Cronk's underlip returned to its normal position. He was beginning to feel reassured—and interested.

"What *do* you think he's doing?"

"Smuggling," said Denstone briefly.

"Smuggling what?"

"That's what I want you to find out. Will you?"

"I must consider."

"Don't consider too long then. That berth's got to be paid for, or cancelled, by to-morrow."

Suddenly a gust of wind howled dismally, and a grey flurry of rain dashed against the window. A vision of hot sun and blue seas rose before Mr. Cronk's eyes.

"All right," he said. "Tell them to book the berth. I'll go."

"Splendid."

Denstone rose to leave. He looked out of the window, turned up his coat-collar, and shivered.

I only wish I could go myself,' he said. 'Well, bring me back a souvenir. And mind—all I want you to do is to keep a sharp eye on young Williams at the ports. What he does at sea needn't concern you. Unless, of course, he's a very bad sailor.'

THREE days out from Liverpool, the *Peasant* was gently rolling to the last of the Biscay swell.

Mr Cronk reclined in a deck-chair and mused. In some ways this first venture away from his native land was proving a disappointment. Here he was, farther from England than he had ever dreamed of being, and yet he could get no sense of having left England at all.

It was true that the weather had changed for the better. The grey skies of March in St George's Channel had given place to blue sky—but a sky whose blue was not appreciably different from that of England. The expanse of sea was no bluer or smoother than that which washed the English shore in early summer.

And all the while he could see the kind English people he always met at the English seaside doing and wearing and saying the same things, and doubtless thinking the same thoughts as they would in England.

The chart of the ship's run which hung outside the saloon showed that they were half-way to Madeira, and that strange lands lay just over the horizon. But Mr Cronk felt as though he had put to sea in a floating boarding-house which might at any moment find itself moored to Brighton Pier.

SUDDENLY young Mr Williams, reclining in the adjacent deck-chair, turned and spoke.

'I say, Mr Cronk, this trip is doing you good,' he said. 'You're a changed man already.'

Yes, from that point of view, the voyage was certainly a success. Mr Cronk felt very different from the hollow-eyed, knock-kneed invalid who had crawled aboard the *Peasant* at the docks; and it was pleasant to know that the improvement was not to be.

'I feel much better,' he admitted.

'Lord, yes. When you first came into our cabin I confess I thought you'd die on my hands—especially as the Irish Channel was going to be choppy.'

Mr Cronk felt himself warming afresh to young Mr Williams. Between the two occupants of Cabin 38 there had already grown up an odd but cordial liking. At present, this was based on nothing more profound than mutual relief at finding one another easy to get on with, and a certain pride that in these first few days of settling down, when many seats in the saloon were apt to be unexpectedly empty, neither of them had missed—or lost—a meal.

On Mr Cronk's side, the feeling was intensified by gratitude. To the diffident Cronk the first meal in the saloon would have been a terrible ordeal without the moral support of young Williams.

At dinner the first evening, he had found himself placed next to a Mrs Howard, a beautiful young woman whose air of confident aloofness scared him out of his life. She was a type of which the seaside hotels and boarding-houses of his experience knew nothing. He admired her immensely, but he knew that left to himself he would never have dared to talk to her. But Williams, not in the least abashed, had started a general conversation, and almost before he knew it, Mr Cronk found himself telling his neighbour all about his influenza, as though he had known her for weeks.

He found her friendly, but disconcerting. He was disconcerted by her habit of saying out loud anything that came into her head. He was disconcerted by her readiness to drink cocktails. He was disconcerted, and puzzled too, by a remark which he overheard her make to her quiet and pleasant husband—an airy dismissal of the passengers as a whole as being. Quite nice people, no doubt, but too hopelessly *worthy* for anything.

Worthy, in Mr Cronk's vocabulary, was an adjective of high praise. To hear it thus used as a term of mild opprobrium was upsetting.

However, he liked Mrs Howard, and dimly he envied her her freer standards of speech and manners. He could not behave like that himself, but it was in a queer way refreshing to see somebody doing what she liked and obviously not caring what anybody else thought about it.

Altogether, reflected Mr Cronk, he was very [illegible] in his company. He was glad that Derstone had persuaded him to go cruising. As for that idea that young Williams was up to some crooked business or other, Mr Cronk's *flair*—in which his confidence had revived with returning health—told him every day more [illegible] that [illegible] was [illegible]. Certainly he would carry out Derstone's injunction to keep an eye on Williams at the ports, but it should be an pleasant task to vindicate instead of besmirching the young man's character. Williams was not that sort at all.

The voice of Williams broke in on his [illegible].

'I [illegible] what are you going to do when we get to Madeira?'

Mr Cronk jumped. The question came as pat as though his young companion were [illegible].

I haven't decided yet," he answered, cautiously.

"Well, whatever you do, may I come too?"

"Why, of course. I shall be delighted." A wave of friendly feeling suffused Mr. Cronk's breast at the realization that young Williams had taken a liking to him. In his days as a lawyer's clerk he had got out of the way of being liked, and had almost forgotten how it felt. Now that he had left that repressed and lonely existence behind him, he was recapturing the feeling and found it very sweet.

"Thanks awfully," said Williams. He gave a sharp glance at the forms of the sleepers to their right and their left, and hitched his chair closer to Mr. Cronk's.

"May I ask a favour?" he asked in a low voice.

"Of course."

"It's—it's rather a lot to ask after we've known each other for such a short time, but you're such a decent sort I don't think you'll mind."

Mr. Cronk glowed.

"I sha'n't mind."

"I want you to keep an eye on me when we get ashore."

"*What!*"

The echo of Inspector Denstone's words coming from Williams's own lips was too much for Mr. Cronk's composure.

"Hush—not so loud," Williams warned him. "I don't want the whole ship to know. The fact is, I need looking after. I've been [illegible] lately."

"How—how was that?"

"Oh, I got into a rotten set [illegible] you know.

*As Mr. Cronk stepped on board, he met the gaze of Mrs. Howard. She was too well-bred to say, "I told you so," but she could not restrain the eloquence of her eye.*

—that's my trouble. That's why I've come on this voyage. I'm trying to pull up, but I'm as weak as water."

Mr Cronk was conscious of a great sense of relief. Here was a simple explanation of the action which had puzzled Denstone. So far from being engaged in some nefarious business, Williams had seen the error of his ways and was trying to reform.

"My dear boy, I shall be delighted to do anything in my power. But surely, it's not so bad as you say. You've not had a single drink since we left Liverpool."

"No. I told the wine-steward when I came aboard to refuse to serve me. Tipped him a quid. That's why. So now will you be an uncle to me?"

A protective feeling began to surge up in Mr Cronk's breast.

"I shall be proud," he said.

AND now hour by hour the feeling that they were still in hailing distance of England began to fade.

The sky grew bluer, the sea calmer. The air lost the chill of an English spring, and began to take on a warmth as of early summer.

A couple of dolphins were seen playing about the bows of the [illegible] and a stray sailing-vessel, [illegible] through a telescope, proved to be rigged with sails of a shape quite unfamiliar. The stewards discarded their dark jackets and appeared in white uniforms, and the passengers of the

*Peewit* began to answer in their different ways the call of the sun

There was an outbreak of bathing-dresses and beach-pyjamas among the younger people, who began to devote themselves earnestly to the business of sun bathing Even the older ones moved their deck chairs out of the shade

Mr Cronk changed into his one suit of flannels and basked with them There was a fresh sea-breeze constantly blowing and the sun seemed to him no more than moderately warm But before long he found himself growing unpleasantly hot, and he retreated with his chair under shelter on the boat-deck

Only two other people were there—the Howards. Mr Howard was asleep Mrs Howard was wearing beach-pyjamas of dark blue, a wide, shady hat, and a pair of tinted glasses. She smiled at him

How wise you are, she said Some of those idiots are going to be sorry for their sun-baths They don't seem to realize that this is the African sun They ought to get used to it gradually'

The African sun! The words gave Mr Cronk a thrill. He set up his deck-chair sank back and mopped his streaming forehead

'You've got too many clothes on" said Mrs. Howard in a reproving tone. Hadn't you better take off your coat?"

"No. I don't think so, thank you," said Mr Cronk hastily

She smiled at him

"Why not? Braces?

Mr Cronk blushing hotly at this unexpected and intimate question, nodded

Her smile became a laugh

'Aren't men hopeless Just because you've forgotten to bring a belt, you swelter in a great thick coat Why don't you tie a bootlace round your middle? Derek' She poked her husband in the ribs Wake up and lend Mr Cronk something to keep his trousers up with

Mr Howard gave a protesting grunt and Mr Cronk leant forward, pink to the ears at this public disclosure of his sartorial deficiencies

"No—no Don't disturb him I've got an old tie.'

Well, go and put it on, quick. Oh, and I say'

Yes?" Mr Cronk paused at the top of the companion-way to the main deck

I gather you're going ashore at Madeira with that young Williams'

Yes, that is so. Why?

Don't let him lead you into mischief He looks rather a shady character to me

But I thought you liked him

He's all right to talk to at meals but I don't trust him a yard. So mind be careful'

She gave him another friendly smile as he disappeared from view Mr Cronk went to his cabin half-resentful of her solicitude for him Doubtless, she meant it well but J W Cronk, Private Investigator was surely very well able to look after himself It should be his pleasure to prove that she like Denstone was mistaken about young Williams

IT was on the sixth day of her voyage that the *Peewit* reached the delectable island of Madeira Mr Cronk was wakened from sleep in the early morning by a sound like the howling of wild beasts

Leaping up in alarm—and incidentally bumping his head most painfully on young Williams's berth above him—he found that they had just cast anchor in Funchal Harbour The noise proceeded from a number of swarthy youths in meagre bathing slips who were standing up in small rowing boats and shouting each other down with raucous offers to dive into the harbour after saxpences or under the ship for two shillings

More youths were converging on the ship rowing madly in little boats, and the noise grew steadily in volume All through breakfast it continued, rising to pandemonium every time a passenger was so ill advised as to allow any of the divers to catch his eye It was obvious that the only hope of peace and quiet was to get on shore as quickly as possible

Arrived on land, Mr Cronk looked about him with delight. The bright colours, the profusion of flowers, the white, red-roofed houses so sharply outlined by the sun the queer cobbled streets, the gay little bullock-wagons mounted like sledges on metal runners all gave him a delicious sense of novelty

Even the horde of dark-skinned children who clustered round Williams and himself clamouring for pennies, gave an added touch of picturesqueness to the scene

Penny! Penny! Penny! Give me penny!' they chanted in chorus

Go away!" ordered young Williams sternly But they ignored both the words and the gesture that accompanied them One tiny girl caught Mr Cronk by the sleeve with a grubby paw and said in a hectoring tone —

Give me one penny Me no father!

Poor little thing, she's an orphan said the soft-hearted Cronk, fumbling in his pocket

Orphan my hat," returned Williams Don't give her anything for Heaven's sake or there won't be a child on the island that isn't an orphan in five minutes.

And, indeed, the whole gang with hungry eyes fixed on Mr Cronk's pocket was now chanting "Me no father! Me no father!"

Mr Cronk disillusioned agreed to young Williams's suggestion that they should escape in a bullock-wagon and tour the town. The orphans, baffled by this manœuvre dispersed to look for other prey.

As the bullock-wagon slithered round a corner, Mr Cronk felt something patter into his lap. It was a neat little nosegay of flowers thrown by a smiling girl of ten. Mr Cronk was touched.

"What a pretty thought!" he said. "Thank you, my dear."

But the child had a mind for something more substantial than thanks. She accompanied the cart with outstretched hand while Mr Cronk fumbled for largesse.

Williams laughed.

"Just an orphan like the rest," he murmured.

At that moment a small boy dropped a similar bouquet into Williams's lap, and ran alongside with outstretched hand.

"This is becoming too much of a good thing," said the recipient, ungratefully. He hurled the bouquet back at its donor and called out to the bullock-driver to stop.

"Let's get a taxi and go up the mountain," he said. "The Purser tells me it's the thing to do, and there may not be so many orphans there."

They climbed a narrow winding road along the sides of which grew sugar-cane and bananas. Mr Cronk twice stopped the car to look at the view, but each time that he did so orphans sprang up from nowhere and began throwing nosegays. One such floral tribute, about the size and weight of a small cabbage, dislodged Mr Cronk's spectacles. After that, he permitted the car to proceed direct to the hotel. And it was here that the outing, from being a marked success, became a dire failure.

They had an excellent lunch, but in spite of Mr Cronk's earnest remonstrances, young Williams insisted on having a bottle of wine with it. And though the few sips which Mr Cronk took did not seem to indicate that the wine was specially heady, young Williams, after the meal, seemed considerably the worse for wear.

An hour's quiet rest in the hotel garden put that right, however. They decided to descend to the town far below them by means of the Madeira toboggan—a vehicle like a basket arm-chair on skates, which slides smoothly over the cobbles of a long, steep road, and is restrained from catastrophic speed by the efforts of two Portuguese brigands in slippers who trot one each side holding the contrivance back with a piece of second-hand rope which seems likely to snap at any second.

It is said that nobody has ever been seriously injured on this descent, but neither Williams nor Mr Cronk, while in transit, would have believed that statement if it had been made on oath by an Archbishop. When they had reached the bottom, miraculously unhurt, young Mr Williams stated emphatically that he needed a good strong pick-me-up. And that is how it happened that, just before the *Peemul* sailed for Teneriffe, a shamed Cronk was observed guiding a hopelessly intoxicated Williams up the gangway. As Mr Cronk stepped on board he met the gaze of Mrs. Howard, who was leaning over the rail. She was too well bred to say, "I told you so," but she could not restrain the eloquence of her eye.

Only one small crumb of satisfaction could Mr Cronk glean from his day's outing. At least he could answer for it to Inspector Denstone that Williams had held no guilty communication with anybody on shore.

NEXT day Williams remained in his bunk, and Mr Cronk found himself most undeservedly in disgrace with the passengers. It seemed to be generally held that while a drunken orgy might be forgiven once in a while to a hot-blooded youth like Williams, Mr Cronk was old enough to know better.

People paused in their games of deck tennis or shuffle-board to stare repressively at him as he went by. Only Mrs. Howard was kind to him—and even she was not much moral support because it was obvious that she was profoundly amused by the whole affair.

However, when young Williams did reappear on deck he won Mr Cronk's heart all over again by proclaiming far and wide that the fault was all his—that Mr Cronk had been not his boon companion but his disregarded guardian angel. So contrite was he, indeed, that when they reached Teneriffe he at first refused to go ashore at all. However when he found that the faithful Cronk—who was now even more determined to keep both his promise to Denstone and his own resolution to protect his young friend against himself—insisted on remaining at his elbow he consented to go for a short turn in the town of Santa Cruz.

Here they met a camel being driven casually along the street, which gave Mr Cronk an enormous thrill and made Fulham seem very far away. He returned to the ship with a warm sense of fulfilment.

Now he really did feel that he had been out of Europe, and was a travelled man.

That night, her hold now half-full of bananas and tomatoes in crates the *Peewit* moved on to Las Palmas to pick up the rest of her cargo.

Here Williams refused flatly to go on shore at all.

"No thank you," he said. "I've learnt my lesson. But I can't have you spoiling your fun, Mr Cronk. You go along—I shall be all right. I give you my word not to go ashore or have a drink. Anyhow, I don't feel fit for it. I've got a filthy headache."

But Mr Cronk, choking down his deep disappointment at not being able to explore this island which he had spent so much money and pains to visit, responded bravely that he had no wish to go ashore.

And so, when many of the other passengers disappeared to seek various forms of entertainment, Williams and Mr Cronk sought the promenade deck and lazily watched the loading operations and the row of dark-skinned hawkers strung out on the quay along the ship's side, doing a brisk trade in various oriental trumpery.

"The odd thing about these chaps," said Williams, suddenly, "is that they aren't Spaniards, or Arabs, or Negroes. They're Indians. Why should Indians come here half across the world to sell wooden elephants and glass beads?"

Mr Cronk shook his head. The thing seemed inexplicable to him. Yet Indians these hawkers undoubtedly were.

Silence fell, while they watched a Scots lady and one of the Indians quarrelling fiercely over the price of a worthless souvenir, and obviously enjoying the encounter hugely.

"If my head weren't so like a piece of cheese I'd rather like one of those big black elephants," Williams remarked after a time. "I promised a girl friend of mine to bring her something. A woman she knew brought back an elephant with green tusks from one of these trips. I'd rather like to get her one like it."

He sat up, and fell back in his chair with a groan.

"My head's simply throbbing," he said in a pathetic tone.

"I'll go," said Mr Cronk. It occurred to him that Denstone has asked him to bring back a souvenir. Perhaps he, too, would like a green-tusked elephant. Besides, the driving of a bargain would while away some of the tedium of this interminable day.

There did not seem to be many of the green-tusked elephants on sale, but at last he found a merchant who possessed a couple and was prepared to part with them at a not too ruinous price.

He returned to Williams flushed with conquest, but that was his only excitement. He settled down to a steady and increasing boredom, which reached its culminating point when the other passengers, returning to the ship for dinner, spoke enthusiastically of the attractions of the town.

But still in Mr Cronk's bosom as the *Peewit* bore him away from the Canaries he had hardly seen, was the honest satisfaction that comes from the job well done. He could now answer for it to Denstone with complete certainty that young Williams had had no nefarious ulterior motive in coming on this trip, and to young Williams himself that he had behaved like a good and loyal friend.

THE voyage home was without memorable incident. Since there was now no more extraneous amusement ashore in foreign ports to be looked forward to, the passengers fell back upon the entertainment the ship itself could provide. Under the experienced leadership of the Doctor and the Purser, they embarked upon a complicated programme of deck-games, dances, whist-drives and the like, and held a last orgy of sunbathing before the mists of the North should envelop them once more.

But Mr Cronk noticed that only Mr and Mrs Howard and one or two others had acquired the attractive tanned look of the experienced sun-bather. Many of the others, even as Mrs Howard had foretold, were by this time beginning to pay a heavy penalty for their unbridled enthusiasms. Their skins had peeled, and they looked as if some strange disfiguring epidemic had broken out amongst them. One or two of the worst cases were actually in the doctor's hands, suffering from blood-poisoning.

Mr Cronk himself looked bronzed, felt fit, and was eating—as people generally do on shipboard—far too much and enjoying it all. He even began to take part in the deck games.

Mrs. Howard offered to rig him up as a pirate for the fancy-dress dance. And though he did draw the line at that he attended the function and was even coerced into dancing one dance with Mrs Howard who had improvised for herself a brilliant Spanish get-up.

"Come on," she said, imperiously. "Don't be shy. Nobody expects you to dance well on a ship anyhow. Look at that!"

She pointed to where the *Peewit's* two tattest passengers had just crashed heavily into the rail as the ship gave a slight roll. So Mr Cronk took heart of grace, and even regretted for a moment or so that he had not come as a pirate after all.

*At last Mr. Cronk found a merchant who possessed a couple of the green-tusked elephants and was prepared to part with them at a not too ruinous price.*

But in spite of such delights, he began as the air grew cooler, to be conscious of a queer longing to get back home.

It gave him a real thrill when a wireless message was handed one morning to young Williams. The message in itself was not interesting—'Peter will meet you at Liverpool,' was all it said—but it seemed to bring Mr. Cronk once more within hail of his native land.

All the same, so perverse is human nature he felt a sentimental pang of regret when the time came to strap up his bulging bag and see it carried on deck as the *Perth* steamed slowly up the Mersey.

When she had anchored and the tender that was to take her passengers to the docks came alongside Mr. Cronk thought he

could see a slightly strained air in the expressions of his fellow-voyagers. Most of them had loaded themselves recklessly with souvenirs, and the great question now loomed large in their minds, how much they would have to pay on the shawl from Teneriffe or the bottles of rare Madeira.

Mr. Cronk had no such anxiety. He feared no Customs officer in the world, for the only souvenir of his voyage was the large wooden elephant which, too awkward in shape to go into his bag, was now making an unsightly bulge in his raincoat.

Young Williams, owing to his self-imposed penance at Teneriffe and Las Palmas, had likewise nothing to declare.

IN the bustle as they disembarked Mr. Cronk lost sight of Williams. Suddenly he felt his arm gripped and a voice in his ear said: "Hallo, old boy!"

"Denstone!" said Mr. Cronk, delighted to see a welcoming face. "How are you? But Inspector Denstone evidently had no time to waste in idle civilities.

"Are you meeting Williams when he's through Customs?" he asked crisply.

"Yes. He's asked me to dine with him at the Adelphi Hotel, before we catch the night train."

"Good. Then you and I'd better go up to the hotel at once, and wait for him."

"But I haven't been through the Customs."

"That'll be all right. I'll see to that. Got anything to declare?"

"Only this."

Mr. Cronk extracted the black elephant with some difficulty from his pocket.

"That's not dutiable," said Denstone. "What's it for?"

"For you," answered Mr. Cronk simply.

"Eh?" Denstone's voice showed consternation rather than gratitude.

"You asked me to bring you a souvenir."

"Oh—oh, I see. Thanks very much indeed—my wife will be very pleased." He tucked the elephant under his armpit. "Now, come on."

Mr. Cronk, rather annoyed at the casual reception of his gift, hung back.

"Hadn't I better wait for Williams?"

"I shouldn't. I'm afraid Customs may keep him rather a long time."

Denstone hailed a taxi. During the short journey to the hotel they did not speak. Mr. Cronk was busy savouring, with delight, the familiar atmosphere of these wet and grimy streets.

Denstone led the way to a secluded corner of the hotel lounge.

"Now," he said. "Is young Williams up to anything, or isn't he?"

"You shall judge for yourself," said Mr. Cronk, and poured out the whole story of the suspect's movements during the cruise.

Denstone seemed disappointed.

"H'm—not much there," he commented. "Of course, that wireless message might be a warning of some kind. 'Peter' might stand for 'Police'—though how anybody could know we were after him beats me."

Mr. Cronk shook his head.

"I don't believe . . ." he was beginning when a man came up to them.

"Hallo, Davis—What luck?" asked Denstone, swiftly.

"None, sir."

"Nothing at all?"

"We searched him to his skin, looked in his mouth, combed his hair—nothing. Went through his baggage, too. No good. Not a thing. Unless it's hidden in this!"

With a flourish he produced young Williams's souvenir elephant from behind his back.

"But I've examined it," he concluded, "and there isn't a sign."

Inspector Denstone stared at the elephant thoughtfully for half a minute. Then he turned to Mr. Cronk.

"You say you bought the elephant for Williams, when you got your own?"

"Yes. And that's why I don't believe—"

"Did he make any special stipulations about them?"

"Only that he wanted one with green tusks."

Denstone nodded.

"I see. And were many of the Indian hawkers selling elephants with green tusks?"

"No. Only this one, that I could see."

Denstone nodded again. From the sofa beside him he picked up the elephant which Mr. Cronk had given him.

"Have a look at this, Davis," he said.

Davis turned the elephant over, and looked at its belly. Then he looked closer. Then he produced a magnifying glass, stuck it in his eye, and subjected the black paint to a minute inspection.

Then he looked up, and it was plain that he was excited.

"By Jove!" he said. "May I—"

"Go ahead!" said Denstone.

Davis produced a big clasp-knife on a chain and performed a ruthless operation on the elephant's vitals. And suddenly a chunk of the wood came away bodily, and was followed by something hard, which fell on the floor and lay there glittering.

Denstone swooped on to this.

"Glory!" he said in a tone of suppressed excitement. "The Mactaire Diamond! Cronk, old boy, you've done it again."

Mr. Cronk blinked. It was plain that his gift for criminal-catching had worked once

again, but he wished that it would not insist on working, so to speak, independently of him and without letting him know how it got its results. Still, that it should work at all was the great thing.

"Er—what is ?" he began.

The MacClure Diamond? The biggest item in a colossal jewel haul that was made in South Africa six months back. We couldn't make out where the stuff had got to, but it's pretty clear now—thanks to you—what's been happening."

"What?" asked Mr. Cronk, to whom it was far from clear.

Well, the original thief sails for Southampton in one of the intermediate boats that call at Las Palmas. There he takes an innocent walk ashore, meets his mate—your Indian hawker—dumps the stuff with him, and goes on to Southampton ready to turn himself inside out if the Customs want him to. Meanwhile, Mr. Indian sends the stuff home bit by bit by selling his beastly green-tusked elephants to young crooks doing the Gordon Line's round trip for their health. It's a very pretty scheme, because Customs are never very fierce with a harmless tripper. Or at least," he added grimly, "they haven't been so far."

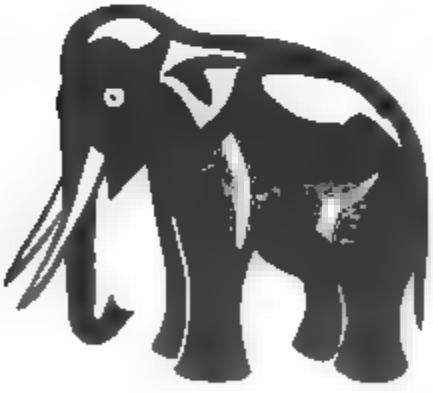
I see," said Mr. Cronk. His chief emotion was disappointment in young Williams.

I'll bet you do, you artful old devil! I'd have liked to have seen you standing by and pretending not to notice when Williams changed those elephants over! Souvenir for me, indeed!"

He gave a rich chuckle—and suddenly checked it.

"Here comes Williams," he said. Thinking he's diddled the Customs and all he's got to do now is persuade you to give him back his elephant. It's going to be a nasty jar for him when he finds that old Cronk's a detective."

And it was. Mr. Williams's hurt surprise when Inspector Denstone took him into custody was the finest tribute which Mr. Cronk's abilities had yet received.



# PERPLEXITIES

### 1,132.—THE DAY'S WALK

LIGHTFOOT and I had a hefty bike last Saturday. Our first stage was from Archester due west to Borring. Shorter by two miles was our southward tramp from Borring to Chalbury, where we lunched and had a look at the cathedral before going on, in a direction east of south, to the picturesque village of Dreke. This journey was only half as long as our first stage, but the final stretch to Archester seemed interminable, though it was, in fact, only two miles longer than the road from Archester to Borring. Midway between Dreke and Archester we halted for refreshment at the Halfway House, and were surprised to see Chalbury spire so near. The innkeeper told us that the distance to Chalbury was the same as to Dreke, but as he said, "There bain't no road from here to Chalbury—you've have to go round a corner like through Dreke to get there." We told him we had just traversed that route, and were now making for our starting point, Archester. "Ah," said he, "when you get there you'll have been a tidy step for one day—and all along they Roman roads—straight as a die they run from one place to the next!"

Well, it *did* seem "a tidy step" to us. How far do you make it?

### 1,133.—A STANZA IN CIPHERS.

THE key word to the following versicle is one of ten letters—all different—which are numbered from 0 to 9. Four of the lines begin with a vowel. The theme of the stanza has a bearing on the key-word. Can you decipher it?

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 8909212 | 201692. | | | |
| 13 | 3456789 | 12 | 26958 | | |
| 16 | 12 | 84 | 729 | 64 | 3709, |
| 845 | 3540 | 933456 | | 64 | 6758, |
| 345 | 61092 | 43 | 265 39 | 45 | 2459 785926 |
| 475 | 095162 | 296 | 64 | 657926 | 6926 |

### 1,134.—CUBIST CAKES

TWO artists, A and B, of the Rectangular School, having each an impending marriage in his family, were ordering wedding cakes. Their designs, both cubist in conception, differed in detail. A's was to be topped by a two-inch cube, resting on a two-and-a-half-inch cube, which in its turn was supported by a three-inch cube, and so on. B's, less grimly modern in structure, had a one-inch cube at the top, the next being a two-inch cube, the next a three-inch, and so on.

As neither wished to do anything the other knew, it stipulated that the cakes should be of the same height, but left the size to the discretion of the confectioner, "not too big for an ordinary dining-room," added A, as a precaution not altogether

The confectioner found that he could make two such cakes of very modest dimensions or, alternatively, a larger pair of reasonable size. He naturally supplied the latter!

How high were the cakes? Which contained the greater volume of cake-stuffs, and what was this volume?

If the confectioner, disregarding A's final proviso, had gone to the next (larger) size that fulfilled the other conditions, what would then have been the height of each cake, and the volume of the larger one?

### 1,135.—AND THEREBY HANGS—

BELOW are ten words, masquerading for the moment as "tales." It is your task to re-arrange the letters in each of the phrases to form a single word:—

(1) THE TALE (2) HER TALE.
(3) SPRY TALE (4) PRAM TALE
(5) GRASM TALE (6) SIT UP TALE
(7) A BIRCH TALE (8) A DOER TALE
(9) TINTED TALE (10) BUST CORN TALE

### 1,136.—THE FAMILY TREE.

THERE were once gathered together under the same roof one grandfather, two fathers, one grandmother, two mothers, four children, three grandchildren, one brother, two sisters, two sons, two daughters, two married men, two married women, one father-in-law, one mother-in-law, and one daughter-in-law. And yet it was a comparatively small party. What is the smallest number of people that would fit the case?

### 1,137.—HOW MANY SHOES?

A PROMINENT personage in Bolonia thought he would bring great honour to himself by presenting shoes to all those in his native city who would, or could, wear them. Now, in that city five per cent. of the inhabitants are one-legged, and half of the others prefer to go barefoot. How many shoes did he need to buy?

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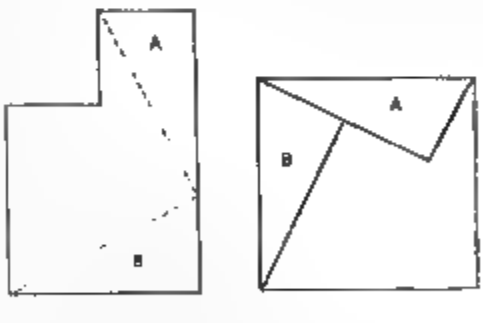
## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 1,129.—A CUTTING QUESTION.




### 1,130.—A FALLING MARKET.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brogbun sold | 2 at 5d. and | 25 at 3d. | |
| Peterman | 5 | 20 | " |
| Larkin | 14 | 5 | " |

### 1,131.—THE MISSING LETTER.

SLEEPLESSNESS IS A MOST DISTRESSING DISEASE.

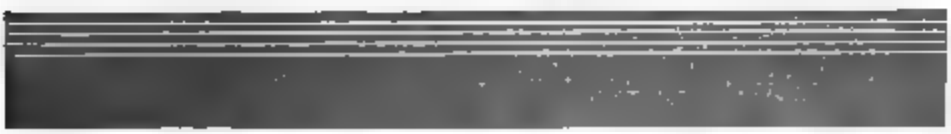
# TÊTE-À-TÊTE.....

**IN THE FRAGRANCE of PLAYER'S, new interests spring into being . . ways and means are discussed and conversation runs its happy course.**

# PLAYER'S

'MEDIUM' NAVY CUT CIGARETTES

100 BOXES 4/8° · FLAT TINS OF 50 FOR 2/6°



Issued by The Imperial Tobacco Company [illegible] N.C. 05.B

# YOU AND YOUR HOME

*A Monthly Miscellany for the Modern Woman*

*Conducted by*

**"MILADY"**

*Inquiries should be addressed to "MILADY," c/o THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply.*

**Mending Cracked Grates.**

If a crack develops in the fire-bricks or surround of one of your grates it should not be neglected, for such fissures are not only unsightly and heat-wasting but actually dangerous. On the other hand, there is no need to call in the builder, you can repair the damage yourself with the utmost ease by using a tin of special fire-cement. This looks very much like putty, and is applied with a knife in a similar fashion. The fire can be re-lighted directly you have completed the work, the cement soon sets as hard as iron. This preparation only costs 1s. 9d. per 3lb. tin, and is equally useful for fixing loose tiles, filling in holes and any other job that is required to stand heat.

**A New Egg-Preservative.**

I have lately come across something that should be of the utmost interest to housewives and poultry-farmers. This is a scientific preservative, British-made, which is guaranteed to keep eggs perfectly fresh for eight or ten months. All you have to do is to dip them in a special liquid—five hundred can be treated in about half an hour—allow them to dry, and then store them somewhere cool. Once they are dry they can be packed in boxes and sent anywhere—even to the tropics—without fear of deterioration. The preparation is always ready for use, it needs no mixing, boiling water, or storage in pails. Unlike "pickled" or "waterglass" eggs, those treated with this liquid can be boiled without piercing, poached, whipped, or used for any other purpose required. This excellent preparation is quite harmless to the skin and does not affect the contents of the egg in any way; what it does is to effectually (and *invisibly*) seal the pores of the shell. A small tin, to treat about 250 eggs, costs only 2s. 8d., and there is no necessity to use it all at once. Larger tins are also available, and are, of course, more economical.

**Irish Linen Bargains.**

There is a house in Ulster, long famous for its wonderful linens, which is offering some very tempting bargains just now. Fine-quality white hemstitched Irish linen huckaback towels, with pretty damask ends in blue, pink, helio, or gold—a welcome note of colour—cost only 2s. 3d. each, or snow-white linen sheets, 2 yards by 3 yards, 20s. 6d. a pair. Napkins in white linen with lovely floral designs, are six for 4s. 3d.—wonderful value. Your men-folk, too, may be interested in Irish linen shirts—white ground with helio stripes, or tussore ground with black stripes—at 8s. 6d. each, with two soft collars to match. Shirts of this quality would cost a great deal more in the shops.

*(Continued on page 32)*

# £2 a week for your widow

## OR

# £2 a week when you retire

That is what the new Prudential "Heritage Endowment" policy offers you as a married man.

You can start to draw the income at 60 or 65, making your choice now. When the time comes, you can have a lump sum payment, if you prefer it, instead of the income.

If you do not attain the age, your widow, during the years of her greatest need, will receive

**£2 A WEEK**

and in addition when the income ceases the same lump sum as you would have had.

FILL IN AND FORWARD THIS COUPON.

**To THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE CO. LTD.**
**Holborn Bars, London, E.C.1**

Please supply me with particulars of your "Heritage Endowment" Policy. My age next birthday is ..... I require the income to be payable at age 60/65*

** Delete whichever age is not applicable.*

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

S. 2.33 P P 275

## YOU AND YOUR HOME

*Continued*

A new scientific machine for testing weight

### A Bathroom Weigher.

Here is a useful little novelty for the bathroom—a dainty but strictly accurate British weighing-machine that you merely stand on. It registers up to twenty stone (although I don't suggest you'll ever need such capacity!) and occupies next to no space. This particular model costs 43s., but other types are available at equally moderate prices. I need hardly mention that the best time to weigh yourself is after a bath, as you haven't to work out a subtraction sum to allow for your clothes.

### About Dentifrices.

The extravagant claims made on behalf of certain tooth-pastes are very misleading if one believed them one would never dream of going to the dentist. Sensible folk of course know that a dentifrice has its limitations, and that [illegible] mouth scientifically [illegible] the enamel or tissues it has done pretty well everything that can reasonably be expected of it. If you wish, I can recommend you to an old favourite, in tablet or paste form, which is most pleasant to use, moreover, it cleans and polishes the teeth to perfection, without the slightest risk of injury. The youngsters love it—and that's saying something.

### Banishing Constipation.

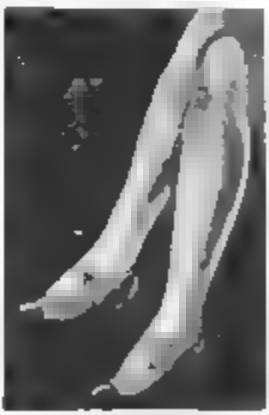
Judging by the letters that reach me constipation remains one of the worst bugbears of our sex. I strongly advise sufferers from this obstinate trouble before they resort to habit-forming purgatives, to try a modern and thoroughly scientific method of *prevention*. This consists of taking, every day, two tablespoonfuls of a delicious cereal food which encourages the organs to function in a gentle, natural way—the doctor's ideal. It does this for two reasons. Firstly, it supplies the necessary bulk or "roughage" so often absent in our diet; secondly, it is rich in Vitamin B, which acts as a tonic to the intestines. This health-giving cereal needs no cooking; you just take your two tablespoonfuls with cold milk or cream, or added to other foods.

### Weather Protection for Women.

The outdoor woman who wants to get through the winter safely and comfortably *must* have a thoroughly reliable coat—weather-proof *and* waterproof. This seems to suggest something hopelessly heavy and utilitarian, but it needn't. I can put you on to a moderate-priced coat, man-tailored on most stylish and sporting lines, and available in all sorts of styles and materials, which is not at all heavy and will yet keep you pleasantly warm on the coldest day. As to rain, although it contains no rubber whatever it is proofed so effectually as to keep out the heaviest downpour. A woman always appears well-dressed in one of these shapely coats—so different from the cheap-looking things one sees about!—and, what is equally important, she is adequately protected against all extremes of weather.

### A Note Concerning Stockings.

Stockings needless to say, but very important in the modern woman's scheme of things, and I am sure that many of you will be glad to know that a famous British firm, after lengthy experiments, has succeeded in combining pure silk and fine lisle to make really attractive and durable stockings. They look like silk with all its sheen and smoothness, they wear as well as lisle. These excellent stockings combine elegance of appearance and economy [illegible] are obtainable [illegible] pair.



Charming stockings made of a mixture of pure silk and lisle.

### The Ideal Furniture Polish.

[illegible] polishes are half the battle in keeping floors and furniture nice. One requires more

(Continued on page 34)

To correct CHILDREN'S STOMACH TROUBLES give

DINNEFORD'S PURE FLUID MAGNESIA

—which neutralises acidity, promotes natural movements, removes pain, soothes the digestive organs and generally establishes a healthy stomach. The most successful treatment for indigestion, biliousness, constipation, etc. A safe, harmless fluid—used for over 100 years. Being fluid it cannot form hard concretions in the stomach and is undoubtedly the finest form in which to take magnesia.

Recommended by Doctors for over 100 years.

1/3 & 2/6 per bottle

BRITISH MADE. BRITISH OWNED.

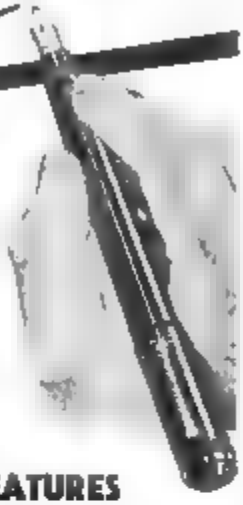
# INTIMATE FACTS YOU DARE NOT IGNORE

## A doctor's straightforward advice to women

Fading looks, strained nerves, weakened vitality—what a high price many women pay for a mistaken sense of modesty. Too shy to ask their doctors the significance of certain small symptoms, they not only suffer months of unnecessary discomfort but run far graver risks than they realise. They do not know what the modern technique of personal hygiene can accomplish for their health and happiness. It is for the enlightenment of such women that the proprietors of Milton have produced an invaluable handbook—"Yes—but how shall I look ten years from now?" Written by a doctor it gives sane and simple advice on the care which every woman should exercise during the most important years of her life.

A line to the "Woman's Department" of Milton, whose address is 10–12, Brewery Road, London N 7, will bring you a copy under plain sealed cover.

No other pen is so helpful to those who have to write a lot—



For pages after page you can carry on writing with the Ford Pen just as if you were using a soft pencil—never any need to shake it to start it writing—never any need to bear hard on the paper to keep it writing—it will write a page most comfortably and as long as there is ink in it—and it holds three times as much as ordinary self-filling pens. You need never "run dry" unexpectedly because you can see at a glance how much you have left.

3 UNIQUE FEATURES

1 Clear, transparent and invincible reservoir takes place of usual perishable rubber sac.

2 Capacity of standard model is 4 c.c. of ink. It is 4 times as much as ordinary fountain pens.

3 Automatic "non-leak" valve absolutely prevents leakage in any position and guarantees instant writing.

GUARANTEE. Try this pen for 30 days. If not completely satisfied send it back to T. H. Ford and, Pen Service Depot, 72 Piccadilly, W.1, and your money will be refunded without quibble. Each Ford's Patent Pen is fully guaranteed but last care.

MADE IN ENGLAND

30/- ALSO IN OTHER SIZES. 25/- & 42/-

FORD'S PATENT ALL-BRITISH PEN

MADE BY FORD'S OF GOLD MEDAL BLOTTING FAME

Ford's Patent Pen is obtainable from most stationers, stores, and all W. H. Smith & Son's branches and Boots' Stationery Departments. In case of difficulty write to T. H. Ford, Ltd., Pen Service Depot, 72, Piccadilly, London, W.1.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

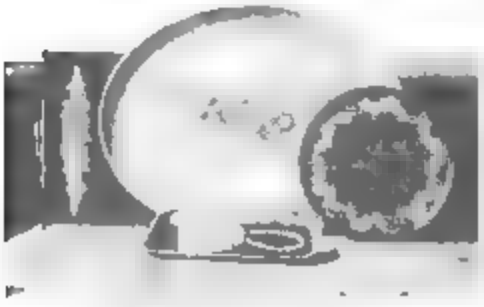
than a mere shine the metal polish must be economical in use must feed as well as protect the article to which it is applied, and must give a hard, brilliant surface that will *last*. Not every preparation fulfils these stipulations but there is one at least invariably used in my own home—which stands pre-eminent. I happen to possess a good deal of old dark oak, and some of the polishes I have experimented with tend to lighten it considerably, but the make I have in mind actually enhances the richness of the shade, besides nourishing the wood and bringing out the beauty of the grain. For floors it is superb, giving a lustrous sheen that stands up splendidly to hard wear without being dangerously slippery. This polish is sold in 6d. and 1s. tins, and a larger tin, and goes a surprisingly long way.

### Take Care of Your Throat.

If you are a sufferer from winter sore throats, with husk ness and relaxation of the muscles, let me recommend you to some most excellent and pleasant [illegible] pastilles. They cost only 6d. and 1s. a box, and will be found particularly soothing. They are a boon indeed to people who have to use their voices a great deal, while smokers like them because they freshen the palate and remove that unpleasant dryness.

### Trays of Distinction.

I am illustrating below some charming "heatproof" trays which are to be obtained in numerous colours and designs. They are both serviceable and beautiful, and would make ideal presents. They are very strong, will last for years, and are not at all expensive.



*The tray on the left is finished in*

### Weed-killing Made Easy.

There are, I know, many keen amateur gardeners among my readers, and we now come to a little novelty that should interest them. This, as the picture above shows, consists of a sort of walking-stick filled with a special powder for killing lawn weeds. You push the stick into the weed and a charge of powder is automatically placed in the centre, killing the unwanted growth without damaging the turf. This novel tool costs 10s. complete, and additional supplies of the powder are obtainable very cheaply.

*A weed-killing tool that saves backache.*

### Stomach Troubles.

Doctors are revising many of their opinions formerly held concerning indigestion and allied disorders, and are coming to the conclusion that most of these ills arise from acidity. While the stomach is in an over-acid condition it cannot function properly and the inevitable result is indigestion, heartburn, flatulence, and a host of other unpleasantnesses. If you suffer in this way, do not fly to mysterious medicines and treatments, but try a bottle of an old and well-tried remedy that cannot possibly do you any harm, but will, on the contrary, almost certainly restore your digestive organs to perfect health. It is quite pleasant to take, soothes the inflamed membranes, and will speedily remove distressing symptoms.

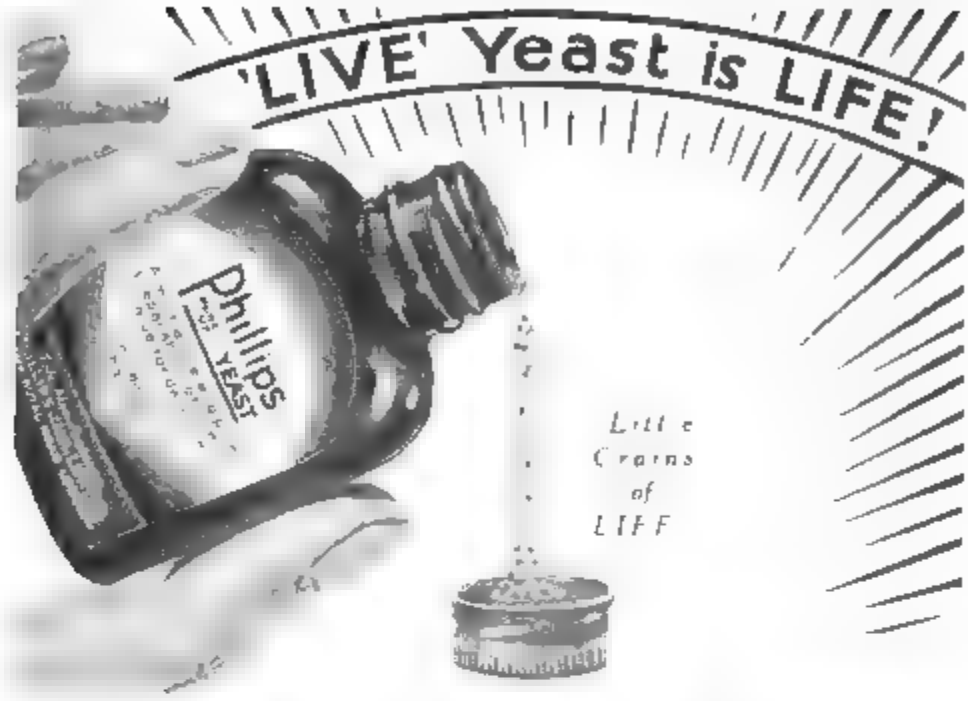
### A Wonderful Nerve-Restorer.

When you are worn-out and run-down with nerves all to pieces and system out of tune, when you are "convalescing" after illness, or when you simply require a delicious, easily-digested "night-cap"—these are the times when you should turn to a delightful food-beverage made from the finest malt extract, fresh milk and new-laid eggs. It is very easily prepared, remarkably nutritious and sustaining, and a never-failing nerve-restorer. Those who suffer from sleeplessness will find it invaluable. The preparation is sold in tins at 1s. 1d., 2s. 10d., and 5s. 3d., and you should be careful to avoid substitutes.

### A "Noiseless" Alarm-Clock!

We come now to something that many a light sleeper must have longed for—an alarm clock with a noiseless tick! Haven't you often lain awake, hour after hour, and cursed the maddening beat of the clock? Now, at long last, the deal has arrived—a reliable alarm with an absolutely soundless tick, even when placed quite close to the

*(Continued on page 36.)*




**JOIN the crowds of men and women who have discovered the Simple Way to HEALTH, STRENGTH and VITALITY. . . All that is necessary is to take with your meals a small quantity of PHILLIPS PURE LIVE YEAST.**

THIS SPLENDID REMEDY ensures perfect assimilation of all food consumed and purifies the entire digestive system. It converts a jaded, tired person into a being instinct with LIFE, VIGOUR, and ENERGY

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- ¶ It regulates and tones the entire system.

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**SOLD BY ALL CHEMISTS**

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## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

(*Continued*.)

*This alarm clock has a noiseless tick*

sleeper! The alarm itself, although clear is refreshingly gentle, it doesn't terrify one by a [illegible] clangour. This noiseless clock is made by a famous firm, and costs from 10s. to 30s. according to style and finish.

### "Expanding" Bookcases.

Readers who are dissatisfied with the present arrangement of their books, or who are contemplating alterations to their libraries, should not overlook the numerous advantages offered by sectional or "expanding" bookcases. Nowadays, if you go to a good firm, these are very handsome things—simple or elaborate, according to your taste and pocket—though alike in one important respect—they always look complete, but can be added to without any loss of appearance as your need for storage space increases. The "lay-out" is readily adaptable to suit a particular room or recess, and the sections are much more convenient to handle than an ordinary "permanent" bookcase, which is not only heavy and bulky but offers no scope at all for expansion.

### A Tonic You Should Try.

A harmless tonic, guaranteed to contain no drugs, offers you renewed health and greatly-increased energy at a cost of only a penny a day! This is the claim made by the manufacturers of a preparation of pure live yeast in granular form. The powder is placed on the tongue and swallowed with a little water before meals, and taken in this way it is quite tasteless. The beneficial action begins within a few minutes. The yeast stimulates digestion, prevents the formation of toxins, and purifies the whole system. It eliminates the *causes* of most ailments, feeds starved nerves, and will speedily make you feel years younger—full of life and vigour. A flat, curved bottle—very handy for the pocket—containing a fifteen-day supply, costs only 1s. 3d.

### A Profitable Hobby.

There was never a time, probably, when so many women were anxious to make a little extra money. For this reason, I think, some of you may be glad to know how to turn an interesting hobby to profit. There is a firm in London which undertakes, for a moderate fee, to teach you how to make sweets and chocolates in your own home. The necessary equipment is provided free, ingredients are supplied at very low prices, and all the "cooking" can be done with ordinary kitchen utensils. The company guarantees to give its students every possible assistance, and I am told that many women who have taken their course of instruction are now earning nice little incomes by the sale of home-made sweets. The work is dainty and interesting, and well within the average woman's capacity.

### Fabrics of Beauty.

I have just been looking through the patterns and price-lists issued by a famous British firm in connection with their fabrics. The materials are so beautiful, and the prices so moderate, that I feel I should like to rush away at once and start an orgy of purchases! You really *must* see some of these fabrics, which cover practically the whole range of women's requirements—to say nothing of the kiddies! There is a wonderful rayon and wool marocain, ideal for dresses and frocks, a delightful crêpe exquisitely soft, yet hard-wearing, and a rich soft dress satin for afternoon or evening frocks. Other fabrics, rich and silky, in the loveliest shades imaginable, are available for *lingerie* and children's frocks, and all of them are guaranteed to wash perfectly. As for printed fabrics, their beauty will hold you spellbound, yet the prices are quite reasonable. Let me give you the name of this firm—you are certain to want some of these materials directly you have seen and handled them.

### Irish Linen Handkerchiefs.

I am illustrating here some lovely handkerchiefs, in sheer Irish linen, made by a famous Belfast firm and supplied direct to the public. Men's full-sized, with hand-embroidered initial, cost 4s. 8d. per half-dozen; ladies' edged with fancy lace in various designs, 3s. 3d.; or, with hand-embroidered two-letter monogram, 5s. 6d. per half-dozen. The quality of these "hankies" speaks for itself.

*Some lovely Irish linen handkerchiefs.*

Yours sincerely,

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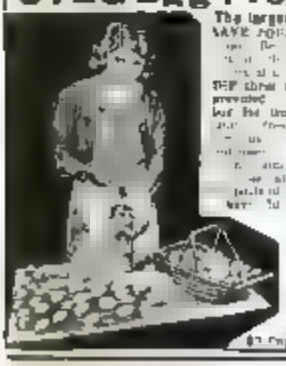

The largest Household ECONOMY
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THE three new OTEG with wire stand
preserves [illegible] and STORES in new
[illegible]
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# Teeth Troubles, and How to Avoid Them

## FOR PARENTS AND LOVERS OF CHILDREN

By

**KATHLEEN DANE**

DECAYED teeth are both unnatural and avoidable. Our teeth as among primitive races who live on simple natural foods) are intended by Nature to function effectively and to remain sound white, and strong from the time they appear to the completion of our allotted span

Diet is the first thing to consider, the tremendous importance of correct food cannot be stressed too strongly as witness the Memorandum to the Ministry of Health by the Advisory Committee on Nutrition, wherein the following significant sentence occurs: "There is evidence that too little calcium, iodine, and iron is frequently contained in the diet." Calcium is undoubtedly the most important element concerned in growth because it forms the vital centre of every cell in the body. Any shortage is shown by early dental decay, low resistance against infection and an irritable, nervous disposition. Perfect cleanliness and scrupulous attention to the mouth cannot *alone* avert dental decay and pyorrhœa if the body is meanwhile manufacturing acid poisons which spell disaster to healthy teeth.

Any abnormal state of acidity in the body, caused by an excess of starch or too much manufactured sugar, will cause dental trouble just as surely as failure to keep the teeth and mouth in a thoroughly hygienic condition.

Sugar in its natural state—as contained in fresh fruits, dried raisins, figs, and dates—is by far the best form for children's consumption, and will have no deleterious effects on the teeth or digestion. So far as the rest of the diet is concerned, care should be taken to see that it is well-balanced, including plenty of the calcium so necessary to proper tooth-development.

The teething period is usually dreaded by mothers, but now that the knowledge of nursery hygiene and child welfare has become more general, a healthy baby need not experience much trouble beyond loss of appetite and restlessness for a few nights. Even then, in most cases, correct feeding will alleviate the discomfort. At this time some mothers give the child old-fashioned teething-rings, which seem to ease the pain. In preference to these rings, a rusk, or a hard crust of brown bread, will often afford the same relief.

The first teeth should on no account be neglected or allowed to decay just because they are only temporary, for it must be remembered that the crowns of the permanent teeth are already in the jaws and that their shape and soundness depend to a great extent on the condition of the temporaries when pushed out. Early dental decay should be interpreted as a sign that the diet needs revision, especially in the direction of providing more calcium.

It is not usually necessary to start cleaning the temporary teeth until all of them are through. The best thing to use then is a little milk of magnesia on a fairly stiff brush, taking particular care not to bruise the tender gums.

When the child is old enough to brush his own teeth, he should be taught how to use the brush with an up-and-down and slightly rotary movement, being encouraged to brush the backs as well as the fronts. Cleaning the teeth after every meal is the ideal, but a rule at first is not always practicable; but a definite habit can be made of always cleaning them on rising and—most important of all—last thing at night. The brush should be kept hygienic by rinsing it well after use and hanging it in some airy place, not in a cupboard, or bristles downwards in a glass.

There are many excellent tooth-pastes and powders on the market, which are thoroughly effective for helping to preserve and cleanse the teeth. Care should be taken, however, to avoid those that are at all gritty, or have too strong a medicinal flavour, which may set the child against the necessary teeth-cleaning habit.

Visits to the dentist need have no terrors for the nervous youngster if, instead of waiting until some painful filling or extraction becomes necessary, he is taken, as a preventative measure, at regular intervals from the age of three or four onwards. Small dental defects or unhealthy conditions of the mouth are then easily detected and remedied, thereby saving endless trouble and expense later in life.

It is worth every effort to obtain for the child the beauty and good health which sound teeth mean, and this is not a difficult matter when attention is given to diet, cleanliness, and regular visits to the dentist.

# THE STRAND MAGAZINE

## Contents for March, 1933

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Frontispiece "You ain't seen nothing of a baby, sir. I a pose?" she sez, looking at the skipper "Baby!" he sez, starting as if he 'ad been shot. "Baby!"


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| THE STOWAWAY<br>Illustrations by Will Owen | W. W. JACOBS | 227 |
| A MAN'S MAN<br>Illustrations by Seabright. | GILBERT FRANKAU | 235 |
| GREAT FIGHTERS IN LOST CAUSES<br>Decorations by Gordon Nicoll | THE RT. HON. WINSTON CHURCHILL, P.C. | 246 |
| FOLLOWING PEOPLE<br>Illustrations by Forster | ROLAND PERTWEE | 256 |
| STRANGE GUEST<br>Illustrations by N. M. Hurlbut | MARGUERITE STEEN | 270 |
| THAT KID<br>Illustrations by Edward Osmond | H. DE VERE STACPOOLE | 282 |
| THE COMIC SIDE OF THE CINEMA<br>Illustrations from Drawings | FENN SHERIE | 290 |
| WARNING TO POETS<br>Illustrations by Stanley Davis. | JOHN HASTINGS TURNER | 297 |
| THE TWO LOST CASES<br>Illustrations by W. R. S. Stott | FREDERICK SLEATH | 307 |
| THE OPENING BID IN CONTRACT | COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE | 315 |
| THE LAST HALF HOUR<br>Illustration by Albert Bailey | BRUCE MARSHALL | 318 |
| ACROSTICS | | 327 |
| THE LADY OF QUALITY<br>Illustrations by Elizabeth Earnshaw | MARGERY SHARP | 328 |
| PERPLEXITIES | | 330 |


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**The Index to Volume 84 can be obtained on application to the Publisher.**

**Most of the Original Drawings of the Illustrations in this Magazine are for sale. Terms may be had on application to the Clichè Department, George Newnes, Ltd., 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.**


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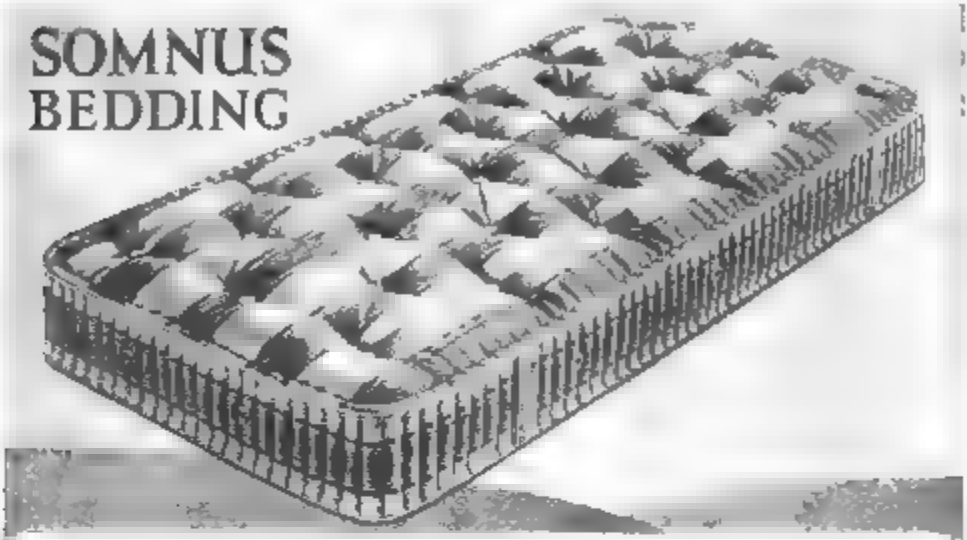

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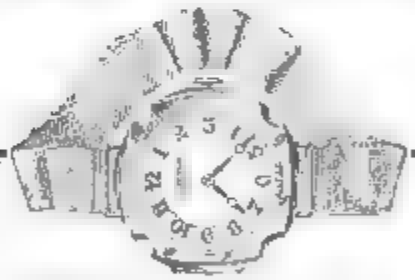

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# RESULT OF "RADIO-ADS"

In the Christmas Number (December) of THE STRAND MAGAZINE a Cash Prize of £5 was offered to Readers who correctly or most nearly correctly placed the Artists whose photographs were reproduced in their order of popularity. The result was determined by an analysis of the whole of the entries received.

Mario Lanza and Michael Hogan proved to be the most popular but were closely followed by Tommy Handley, Ambrose and His Dance Band, Flotsam and Jetsam, Clapham and Dwyer, Alexander and Rose, Johnson Clark, Ronald Frankau and Stanley Holloway respectively.

Two Readers were successful in placing seven Artists in their right order of popularity, the Cash Prize of £50 has, therefore, been equally divided between them. Their names and addresses are as follows:

Mr. L. TAYLOR
18, Cross Street, Hove,
Sussex.

Miss M. A. GARRICK
24, Fortington Road,
Highgate, N.6.

**Payments to these two winners will be sent in due course.**

*March,*
1933

*"You ain't seen nothing of a baby, sir, I s'pose?" she ses, looking at the skipper.*
*"Baby!" he ses, starting as if he 'ad been shot. "Baby!"*

# THE STOWAWAY

## W. W. JACOBS

The night-watchman was in a reminiscent mood. Evening was fading into night, and the wharves on the waterfront were taking on an appearance of sombre peace, denied to them in the garish light of day. Looking back on a long life, from his hazardous perch on a bollard, he found but little fault with it. Poverty, it appeared, had but strengthened a character which stood in little need of support. Half pints had helped to keep in order a digestion which had never given much trouble, and tobacco had played its part in soothing nerves seldom put out of order except by the misdeeds of others.

I've 'ad my share of trouble, he remarked, but it's always been caused by other people. Sometimes it was jealousy, and sometimes it was people who wanted somebody to help them and seemed to think that that was wot I was put ere for. I've helped so many that they could join 'ands and dance round St. Paul's—if the police 'ud let 'em.

The number of people as have come to me for advice, you wouldn't believe. I remember one man who came to ask me wot was the best poison for rats, one that 'ad no flavour to it, and, forgetting for the moment that 'is mother-in-law lived with them I told 'im. Fortunately for everybody it 'ad more flavour than I thought.

Another of 'em complained about his wife, wot 'ad a nasty 'abit of throwing a jug of cold water over 'im whenever they 'ad words, and speaking joking like, I advised 'im to throw a jug of 'ot water over her next time. 'Ot, I said, not boiling, but some people never listen properly. He got a month, and when he came out and came round to see me 'e was in such a temper that if 'e 'ad done wot he said 'e was going to do he would 'ave got ten years, but I wouldn't stop.

They're all alike and, as to saying "thank you" they never dream of it. Plenty of other things they say, but never that. One word a woman called me I didn't even know the meaning of until I 'appened to go to the Zoological Gardens one day and saw it. I've never been there since, and 'ow people can go there agin and agin, and even take their kids there, I can't understand.

The worst time I 'ad was one evening I helped a man—so to speak—without meaning to do it. I was standing outside the gate 'aving a quiet pipe arter a job o' work when I see a man coming along carrying a bundle.

"Hold that for me a minute, mate," he

Vol. lxxxv—18.

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ses, pulling up, "my bootlace 'as come undone."

He shoved the parcel into my arms, and then instead of doing up 'is bootlace, ran off down the road as 'fast as 'is legs could carry 'im.

My first idea was that it was something he 'ad stolen and that the police was arter 'im. It might be valuable, and I was just slipping inside to 'ave a look at it quietly when one end of it made a noise.

'Ow it was I didn't drop it, I don't know. An the funny things that would be said to me about it came into my mind like a flash. Then it began to make more noise, and, wot to do with it, I couldn't think. Some men would 'ave took it outside and left it on the pavement, but I couldn't do that. Somebody might see me and then I should be worse off than ever.

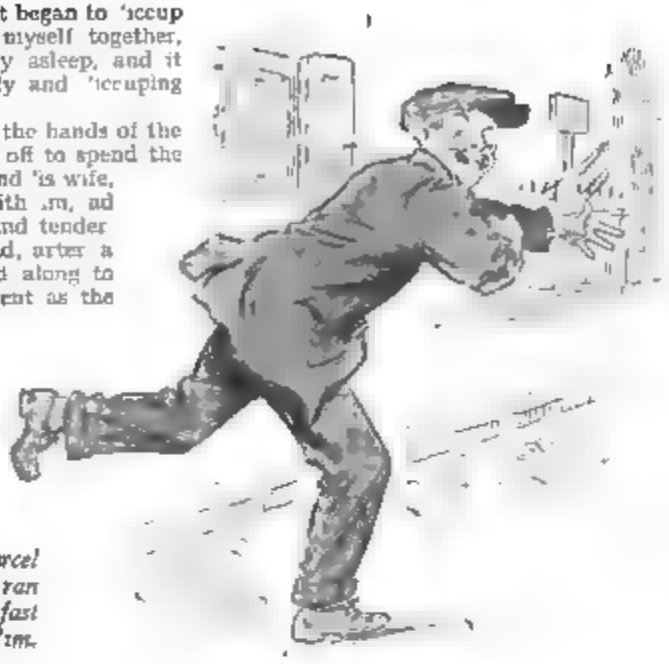
I walked into the office with it and arter putting it on the floor sat down to do a bit o' thinking. [illegible] Speaking to it was no good, it on'y made it worse. I took a little jug o' milk wot I 'ad got for my coffee later on, and gave it that. Leastways, I tried to, but it didn't seem to know 'ow to drink out of a jug, and when I poured some in a saucer, it was worse. Most of it went down its neck, and it got into such a fit of temper, I couldn't do anything with it.

I sat down ag'in and tried to think things out. Fust of all I went and locked the gate, and then I came back and stood looking at that baby, and the more I looked the more I disliked it. I didn't wonder at the man getting rid of it. Then all of a sudden it left off in the middle of a 'owl and laid quite still, with its eyes shut.

My 'art stood stul a'most. If it was dead wot was going to become of me?

And then, all of a sudden it began to 'iccup like a canary. I pulled myself together, and found out it was only asleep, and it went on sleeping peacefully and 'iccuping like clockwork.

Then I 'ad an idea. All the hands of the schooner *Dolphin* 'ad gone off to spend the evening, and the skipper and 'is wife, as 'ad come up for a trip with 'im, 'ad gorn off, too. Very careful and tender I lifted that baby up and, arter a careful look round, walked along to the *Dolphin*. It was as silent as the grave, and arter climbing aboard without waking the baby or stopping its 'iccuping, I crept careful-like to the companion. It was all quiet below, and no light showing, and 'olding the baby in one arm, I backed slowly down the companion-ladder and turned into the cabin.



*He shoved the parcel into my arms and ran off down the road as fast as 'is legs could carry 'im.*

It was so dark that I 'ad to feel my way. I felt the table with my leg, and the door of the state-room, wot 'appened to be left open, with my head, but I was so afraid of waking that kid that I didn't say a word. I laid it down, careful-like in the skipper's bunk, and covered it up with a coat of his wot was 'anging on the door. The last thing I 'eard as I crept out was a tiny little iccup.

I washed my 'ands of it. I stood on the wharf getting a little fresh air, and I made up my mind that I 'ad never seen it, and never 'eard of it. Wot the skipper would do about it was 'is business. He was a man I didn't like, and 'is missis was worse. He 'ad spoke to me more than once as if the wharf belonged to 'im and as if I was put there just to open the gate the very moment 'e rang the bell. I would 'ave given anything to see his face when 'e found the baby, but you can't 'ave everything in this world.

I went back to the office and waited. I warmed myself a cup of coffee and lit my pipe and sat there wondering wot would 'appen. Nobody 'ad seen me take the baby and nobody 'ad seen me go aboard the schooner with it. All I 'ad got to do was to keep my mouth shut and be astonished. I knew the skipper would be.

It seemed ages before the gate bell rang, but it went at last, and I knew by the nasty, spiteful jangle of it that it was the skipper. I went out slow-like and unlocked the wicket and 'im and his wife stepped inside. They passed me as if I was dirt, and neither of 'em said a word. But I didn't mind, I knew there would be plenty soon.

I locked the wicket and went back to the office, and I had 'ardly time to sit down afore I 'eard a noise on that ship. It wasn't very loud while they was down below, but when they came up on deck a deaf man could have 'eard it. Both speaking at once, and Mrs. Briggs much louder than the skipper. Then the noise came nearer, and I knew it was coming to me, and next moment the skipper burst into the office like a madman, followed by 'is missis.

"Who—who—who has been on this wharf?" he ses.

"Wot d'ye mean?" I ses. "Nobody has been on this wharf since you and your missis went out."

"I don't want none o' your lies," he ses, "somebody must ha' been."

"Nobody 'as been," I ses, very quiet. "Wot's the excitement? Have you missed anything?"

"Missed!" he ses. "*Missed!* While you was sleeping your fat 'ead off somebody went aboard my ship and put a baby in my bunk."

"A wot?" I ses.

"A baby," ses Mrs. Briggs, in a funny voice.

"Look 'ere!" I ses, "are you 'aving a little joke with me, or wot? There's no babies on this wharf."

"I tell you there's one in my bunk," ses the skipper. "And, wot I want to know is, 'ow it got there."

"That's wot I want to know, too," ses 'is wife.

"Well, I don't know nothing about it," I ses. "I'm a night-watchman, not a nurse."

"But you must 'ave seen somebody bring it on the wharf," ses the skipper. "It couldn't 'ave got there without 'ands."

"Nobody's been on the wharf," I ses. "I locked the gate when you and your missis went out, and it wasn't unlocked ag'in till you came in just now."

The skipper took a shivering sort o' breath, and 'is missis took one, too.

"'Ow did the baby get there, then?" he ses, as soon as 'e could speak.

"Ask me another," I ses. "Nobody's been on this wharf, that I can swear to. The only thing I can think of is that somebody brought it along in a boat. They could come along to the starboard side without being seen easy enough."

"'Specially with a night-watchman like you on dooty," ses the skipper, glaring at me.

"My dooty is to look after the wharf," I ses. "Why didn't you lock the companion up afore you went off?"

"Why was it put in your bunk? That's wot *I* want to know," ses 'is missis.

"That's wot I was wondering," I ses.

"It's a mystery, that's wot it is," ses the skipper, speaking very loud.

Mr. and Mrs. Briggs both stuffed at the same time, but hers was the loudest.

"It couldn't 'ave stowed *itself* away, I s'pose?" I ses. "Wot size is it?"

"Talk sense," ses the skipper.

He looked so upset that I felt almost sorry for 'im. "It's the fust time he 'as ever 'ad a baby put into his bunk," I ses, turning to his missis, "leastways, so far as my knowledge goes."

It's no good trying to 'elp some people. For a moment I thought the skipper was going to bite me, but afore he could speak 'is missis stopped 'im.

"It's no use blustering at the watchman," she ses. "Blustering won't do you no good, and it's no use you play-acting," she ses, as the skipper began to choke and wave 'is arms about. "Open the gate for me, watchman."

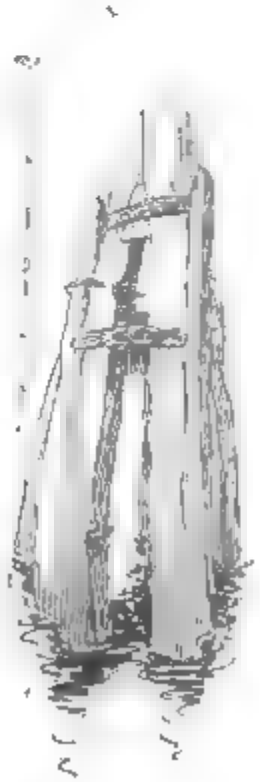
"Where are you going?" ses the skipper.

"That's my business," she ses, walking to the gate. "And I don't want you. You stay behind and look arter your company."

She gave us both a stare, and then she flounced out o' the gate and went off down the street without looking behind 'er.

"Seems to be in a bit of a temper," I ses, locking the gate.

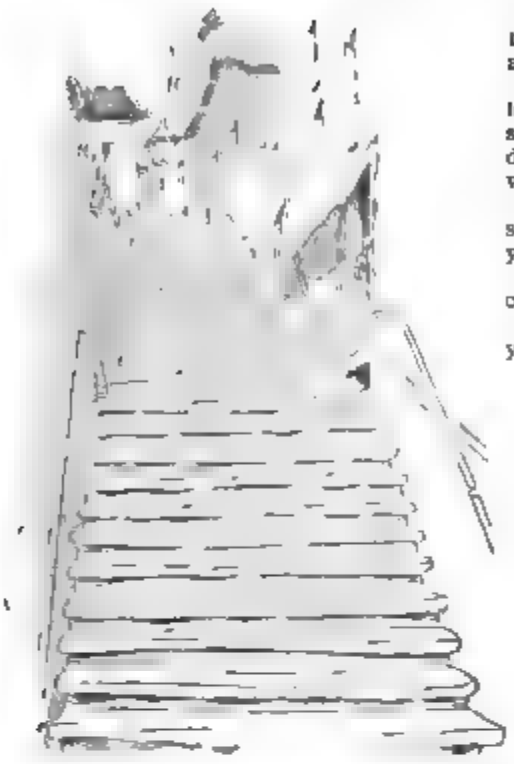
The skipper didn't answer. He stared at me as if 'e 'ad never seen a night-watchman afore, and then 'e walked all round me very slow, staring 'ard all the time, with 'is chin up in the air.



I watched 'im climb aboard 'is ship, and then I went back to the office and sat down. I was a bit tired, but thankful that things was no worse. Neither of em 'ad the faintest idea that I 'ad ever seen the baby, and I made up my mind they never would. Everybody 'as difficulties, but a good 'ead will get you out of most of em.

I don't know 'ow long I sat there when all of a sudden I 'eard a noise at the gate as if somebody was hitting it with their fist, and I 'ad a nasty feeling inside that something unpleasant was going to 'appen. It couldn't be Mrs. Briggs, 'cos she would ha' rung the bell, and it couldn't be the crew, 'cos they would 'ave used the bell and their boots as well. I pulled myself together and went out to open it.

I opened it slow and peeped out, and then I



nearly dropped The man wot ad given me the baby was standing there, and a dirty red-faced woman standing beside him both looking at me and smiling. I shut my eyes, but that didn t do no good When I opened them ag'in they was still there

I've come back for it, mate ses the man

I tried and to think I wanted to do the best for everybody, specially for myself

'Where is it ?' ses the woman ' Where is it ?'

Where s wot ?" I ses.

"The baby," ses the man. "The baby wot I left in your care about an hour ago."

'My lovely little boy,' ses the woman. What ave you done with im ?'

"There ain't no babies ere,' I ses. "I don't know wot you re talking about. You run off and play your little games on some one as likes 'em

Look ere! " ses the man, shoving 'is dirty face into mine. "Do you mean to say I didn't give you my baby ?'

*Baby ?* " I ses, with a laugh. ' Wot do you think I want a baby for ? Ave you been drinking, or is it a game ? "

They both started at once then, and they made such a noise I was afraid somebody might come up. A policeman, perhaps.

Look ere,' I ses, don t stand making that row on the pavement come inside and tell me quiet wot it's all about."

The woman nipped in and the man followed er "You know wot it s about, ' he ses ; "I gave you my baby to 'old while I did my bootlace up. Wot 'ave you done with it ? "

While you did your bootlace up ?" I ses, puzzled. 'Ow long did that take you ?'

He gave a bit of a cough. " Then I ran off," he ses, " and left it with you

" I don t understand " I ses. Wot did you run off for ? "

" Me and the missis ad a bit of a row " he ses, ' and she told me to take the baby and clear out When she's in a temper she says things she's sorry for arterwards, but I took the kid and went. and I 'adn't gorn more than about a mile when I see as I 'ad made a mistake "

' Where s—my—ba-bee ? " ses the woman, beginning to sob

' Then I see you," ses her 'usband, "and I thought I'd leave it with you and go off on my own, but arter I ad 'ad a couple o' pints I began to see I'd done wrong. I thought I 'ad better go back to the missis and tell er wot I 'ad done. Besides, where was I to sleep ? '

" You never gave me no baby, I ses, " it must 'ave been somebody else I m not so fond of 'olding babies. '

The man stared at me as if he couldn t believe is eyesight, then he stepped outside for a moment and looked at the gate, and came back ag in

I'll swear t is the same place, he ses in a puzzled way, ' and I m positive certain you re the man I gave it to."

Are you sure, Jim ? " ses 'is wife, crying

" 'Ow many pints ave you 'ad ? ' I ses, working myself up into a temper " Why don t you be reasonable ? Wot d you think I want your baby for ? If it was me you 'ad given it to I should be looking for you all over the place, to give it back to you Do you think I ve got it in my pocket ? You can come and search the office if you like "

Well,' he ses, scratching his ead, I could 'ave sworn it was you. There can t be another face like yours. There can t be."

You get off 'ome and get sober," I ses. " Wot d'you mean coming 'ere and trying to take my character away ? You'd look sorry for yourself if I put the police on to you."

" Come away, Jim," ses the woman, tugging at 'is sleeve. " It must ha' been some

other gentleman you gave it to. Don't stand 'ere wasting time. I want my baby."

I couldn't 'ardly believe my good luck when I saw 'er lead him away, but, still, I couldn't imagine wot was to be the end of it all. I shouldn't ha' *dreamt* of putting that baby into the skipper's bunk if I 'ad thought there was any chance of the man coming back for it. As it was, if they went to the police about it, wot was going to 'appen to me?

I was trying to think it out when I looked up to see the skipper coming along, and I was just thinking 'ow fortunate it was that he 'adn't come two minutes earlier when the wicket was pushed open and that miserable woman shoved her 'ead in ag'in.

"You don't know anybody about 'ere that looks like you, do you, sir?" she ses.

"No," I ses, very quick. "No. Good night."

"Good night, sir," she ses. "You ain't seen nothing of a baby, sir, I s'pose?" she ses, looking at the skipper.

The skipper started as if he 'ad been shot.

"Baby!" he ses, shouting. "*Baby!*"

My 'usband thought he 'ad given our baby to this gentleman to hold," she ses, nodding at me. "But he ses 'e has made a mistake."

"He didn't make no mistake," ses the skipper, 'arf off his 'ead with joy. "He put it in my cabin the fat old rascal. I'll go and get it, don't run away."

He went off like a shot, and in less than two minutes he was back ag'in with the baby in 'is arms, squalling its loudest. The woman snatched it away from 'im, and the fuss she made over it was ridiculous. She kissed it till it 'adn't got any breath left to cry with, and then she put the arm that

wasn't 'olding the baby, round the skipper's neck and kissed *him*.

"That'll do," ses the skipper, struggling. "There, there, you'll be all right now."

He pushed 'er off, and then stood listening while she told 'im all about it, and then arter she 'ad told 'im wot she'd ha' done to me if she 'adn't been a lady, she kissed the baby ag'in and moved off to the gate. The skipper offered to 'old the baby for 'er and see wot he called, fair-play, but she on'y shook her 'ead and arter telling 'im to knock my block off and then throw me in the dock, she walked away. That's wot they call the gentle sects.

I stood there like a man in a dream. I 'ad done all I could to make things comfortable for everybody, and this was the end of it. There's always plenty of people to take away the character of a man who does 'is dooty without any fuss, and I knew wot would be said about me. Me and the guv'nor 'ad always pulled well together, but, like other people, 'e wasn't always to be relied upon to do the right thing.

"Well," ses the skipper, coming up and staring at me, "wot 'ave you got to say for yourself? Eh? Wot d'you mean by it, telling all them lies? 'Ow dare you put a

nasty little baby in my bunk, and then tell my missis it must ha' been brought up in a boat."

"I was going to tell you arterwards," I sez; "arter I 'ad 'ad my little joke."

"*Joke!*" sez the skipper. "Well, let's 'ope you'll find it a joke. We'll see wot the guv'nor 'as to say about it when I tell 'im in the morning. He don't pay night-watchmen to put babies in shipmaster's staterooms."

Why make mischef?" I sez. "All's well that ends well. There's no 'arm done."

"Oh!" he sez. "And wot about my missis?"

he'd poke his 'end in at the office and tell me a few more things that I didn't want to 'ear.

"You'll find it 'ard to get another job like this," he sez; "it ain't everybody that wants to pay an old man good wages for sleeping in a office every night."

I didn't answer 'im. Not because I didn't

*"Oh dare you tell them lies, you wicked old man!" she sez, 'ardly able to speak for temper"*

I 'ad forgot all about her. It's a funny thing, but when there's any trouble there's always a woman at the bottom of it. If that other silly woman hadn't 'ad a row with her 'usband 'e wouldn't 'ave gone off with the baby and I shouldn't 'ave been mixed up in it. And if Mrs. Briggs 'adn't gone off alone instead of letting her lawful husband go with 'er I could have handed the baby over to the woman and nobody been a bit the wiser. Sometimes I think women was sent so as we shouldn't be too 'appy.

I wanted to be by myself to think things out, but get rid of the skipper I could not. He was walking up and down outside like a cat on hot bricks, and every now and then

want to but because I couldn't think of anything to say He stood there for a minute looking at me and biting 'is lips, and then went off A little while arter I went outside and saw 'im at the gate looking up the road for 'is missis

SHE didn t turn up until an hour arterwards, and then I went into the office, not wanting to listen to their private affa rs But I might ha saved myself the trouble, I could ear them without listening She ad tired 'erself out with wa king, and she was in such a temper that every time the skipper tried to get in a word she shut 'im up I eard them go down the wharf and the further they went the more noise they made The skipper s voice got louder and louder, and she got qu eter and qu eter so I could see 'e was getting the best of it Then I eard them coming back, and the next moment she burst into the office with the skipper behind er Pale as chalk she was, but he was looking very pleased with 'imself

'Ow dare you tell them lies, you wicked old man!' she ses, ard y able to speak for temper "'Ow dare you put babies on board respectable people s ships and then pretend to know nothing about it!"

I stood up and faced 'er "Go easy!" I ses. "*I* ain t been telling any lies. Wot a it all about?"

She started telling me then. Ali about the man and the woman and the skipper anding the baby over, and ali the rest of it When she stopped for breath I managed to get a word in

"You ve got it all wrong," I ses. "I never saw no man and I never saw the baby until I saw it in the skipper's arms

"Oh!" ses Mrs. Briggs "Oh, indeed.

"There's a little bit o' truth in it" I ses, "but not much. The skipper 'as got it all mixed up. If you'll listen a moment I'll tell you the true part.

Go on," she ses, "go on. I d like to ear you tell the truth I was always one for change"

I was standing on the wharf" I ses looking at her very severe, when a young woman a nice-looking young woman—pushed open the wicket and said something to the skipper about a baby Is that true? I ses, turning to the skipper

Yes," ses the skipper, "but you are twisting it about, before that——"

"One at a time," ses 'is wife very sharp. Go on," she ses to me

The skipper went off to the ship and fetched the baby and put it into er arms, I ses. "Then she put 'er arm round is neck and kissed im, and went off with the baby

The skipper made a noise like a steam engine makes just afore it goes into a tunnel

"*Wot?*" ses Mrs. Briggs, screaming "'Ow dare you say such things?"

Ask 'im," I ses, pointing to the skipper "It's—it's all a mistake" ses the skipper The watchman is making mountains out of mole ills"

Is it *true*?" ses is wife

"In a way," ses the skipper "but——

"Wot d you mean by in a way?" ses 'is wife "When you was telling me you didn t say anything about kissing the young woman

I didn't," ses the skipper, shouting at the top of 'is voice. "She kissed me.

Oh!" ses 'is wife drawing in er breath Oh, indeed! And why didn't you tell me about it when you was telling me ali the other things?"

Well" ses the skipper, coughing. I didn't think it was worth mentioning besides I 'ad forgot it, and besides, knowing wot you are——

That did it. She a most frightened *me* They forgot all about me, and they went at it, hammer and tongs, as the saying is, as if I wasn t there. It was a surprise to me to ear ali the things the skipper ad done He kept denying them but that didn't make a bit of difference, it only made er think of some more

They went off at last without even looking at me I watched em from the door, and I couldn't elp noticing that she seemed to be about six feet 'igh and the skipper looked to be about the size of a boy

She knew wot was wot all right, she wasn't deceived But I know wimmen, and I knew she wasn't going to let a chance like that slip Any time she wanted to 'ave any of 'er relations stay with er or anything case the skipper didn t like, she'd bring that up and hold it over his 'ead. And I knew the skipper would never hear the end of it Not if he lived to a undred—unless she died fust

# A MAN'S MAN

## GILBERT FRANKAU

SOON after the mating of Gaynor Rowlatt, which you may possibly remember, there fell upon the Lady Bunty Stourbridge, last of the Three Disgraces to remain single, a Contrary Mood. She, the Lady Bunty, was not going the way of Gaynor, or of Mavis Attwood, whom also you may remember. Far from it! No orange-blossoms, no St. Margaret's, Westminster, no "resultant matrimonial obscurity," as she herself phrased it, for her.

If, eventually, she did marry—"and anyway it won't happen for years, darling"—she would marry into an even fiercer Press limelight than that of present enjoyment. A Cabinet Minister might do. Or failing such, a Magnate with Millions. Meanwhile, however, let Bright Young Spinsterhood go on.

And for six months, be it admitted, the Bright Young Spinsterhood of Bunty Stourbridge left nothing to be desired. During that time she went on going everywhere and doing everything—to the accompaniment of more gossip-paragraphs and more photographs than had ever fallen to her lot before.

Until suddenly—so suddenly that it seemed hardly conceivable—the limelight of publicity went clean out; and although she still came and went everywhere, not even Stephen Groves chronicled her goings and her comings.

Which made her feel—once again to use her own phraseology—"just as though she was dead."

She would have given a good deal to ask Stephen Groves, whom she had always cultivated so assiduously, why she was dead. But pride—and the fact that she had always pretended to dislike publicity—forbade.

Such a question was no more permissible than it was permissible to doubt the beauty of Cecilia Tapsholm, last-risen star in the débutante firmament, whose father—according to the wiseacres of the Diplomacy Club—employed a Press-agent at a thousand a year to assist her up the social skies.

"It's Cecilia's Season," decided the Lady Bunty, conning her rival's photographs in the Spring numbers of the illustrated weeklies. "And next year it'll be somebody else's Season. But what am I going to do about it? What can I do about it?"

Whereupon, if the truth be known, she had a little old-fashioned cry, and took out her Press-cutting album and almost decided to burn the damn thing because what's the use of being somebody to-day if one's nobody to-morrow?" But after that her mood became even more contrary, and she

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*There was no other car in sight, only the road, running on and on He put an arm round her, drew her to him, and made to kiss her*

embarked on a flirtation so definitely perilous—Sir Debonnaire de Millward was fifty, and specialized in the education of the youthful blonde—that even her easy-going mother felt it time to interfere.

"My liver," pronounced the Countess Stourbridge, "cannot be taken lightly To postpone this cure of mine, as you suggest, might be fatal. We leave for Tishy-les-Bains on Saturday"

And on a Saturday in the very middle of the London Season, they left.

II

The dining-room at the Hotel Splendide Majestic et Excelsior at Tishy-les-Bains is about as long as the *Berengaria*, and the chandeliers there glitter like old Versailles. Yet the very first sight of that magnificent apartment turned the soul of the Lady

Bunty sick within her—and in the fortnight which followed she grew to feel that she was not only dead but buried seven feet deep under countless bottles of Tishy water, and countless cartons of health biscuits, and countless draughts of a foul brown mixture which countless maîtres d'hôtel prepared for countless old ladies and countless middle-aged gentlemen with yellow countenances before helping them to 'Menu Numéro Un.'

'Menu Numéro Deux' was for the 'buccaneers,' as Bunty called them. 'Menu Numéro Trois' for "those of our guests who are fortunate enough to find themselves in good health." But long before that second week was out even the splendid and majestic excellence of Menu Number Three failed to stimulate the appetite of the Lady Bunty Stourbridge—longing as only youth can long, for the sight of just one known face.

Barring her mother's, there wasn't one known face at any of those hundred-and-fifty tables. Worse—there wasn't even a face Bunty wanted to know. Until, on the fifteenth evening of their stay, there appeared, all miraculously, the Two Real Men.

The Two Real Men came in rather late and, contrary to the custom of Tishy-les-Bains, without dressing for dinner. One wore pearl-grey flannel trousers and a blue jacket with brass buttons, the other—taller of the two, huge of hand and shoulder, with rusty brown hair, a straggling moustache slightly paler in colour, and a weather-beaten kind of face—seemed faintly familiar, and was attired in a worn suit of positively rhubarb-coloured plus-fours.

"Got any decent wine," trumpeted the man in the rhubarb-coloured plus-fours, ushered by the head waiter to a near-by table. "What's that? Champagne? Certainly not. Champagne isn't a man's drink. We'll have Burgundy. The best you can produce. And you'd better bring a couple of bottles." Then, having scrutinized Menu Number Three: "Yes. That's all right. But cut out the chicken and put in rump-steaks instead. Underdone. With plenty of fat. Potatoes? Of course. Did you ever hear of anyone eating a rump-steak without potatoes? And bring some Worcestershire sauce, if you've got any."

On which, his eyes meeting the Lady Bunty's, he winked.

And despite the fact that it is not the custom even at the Diplomacy Club—where bad manners may almost be described as the passport to good society—for strange gentlemen to wink at Bright Young Spinsters, it must here be chronicled that the Lady Bunty, instead of turning a disapproving cheek to the winker favoured him with the semblance of a smile.

Whereupon the winker made some remark sotto voce to his companion who, subsequently, having inspected Bunty and her mother over a careful shoulder, rose from his chair and came across to them, saying, "I hope you haven't forgotten me, Lady Stourbridge. I'm Harry Pollock. We met at Ascot last year."

"Did we really?" said Bunty's mother. Then raising her lorgnette: "But of course we did. And you told me to back a horse of yours. It came in last, I believe."

Last but one, corrected the smooth-faced Pollock; and, having been duly presented to the daughter, retired.

WHAT followed followed the correctest custom of the travelling English—the occasional glance from table to table, the slight inclination of Lady Bunty's blonde head as she and her mother passed from the dining-room the subsequent approach to music in the hall.

"I want you to meet my friend Major Sinclair," said Pollock, joining them in the hall. "Roy Sinclair, of Cape Remittance—the famous big-game hunter. You've seen his films, of course. Lions and tigers, and all that sort of thing."

Whereto the Countess Stourbridge, still slightly under the influence of Menu Number One, retorted, "I've never seen a film in my life, Mr Pollock"—but did not succeed in foiling the approach.

The big-game hunter gave his hand—the big-game hunter as good as insisted on "us men joining you ladies for our coffee"—the big-game hunter drew a chair close to the Lady Bunty's—and offered both mother and daughter a liqueur.

"Not for me," said Bunty's mother. "I'm here for my health. Major Sinclair?"

But the last of the Three Disgraces accepted a *crème-de-menthe*.

"I've seen your films," said she. "And it was absolutely thrilling. I know a little about Cape Remittance, too. A—a great friend of mine spent a year there."

"The devil he did." And Sinclair winking again chuckled into his moustache.

"He didn't have to," continued the last of Three Disgraces colouring slightly. "He just went there for pleasure—and because there'd been a bit of a misunderstanding about a cheque he'd signed."

On which, without asking permission, Roy Sinclair lit himself a cigar.

It was a hop-pose of cigar, and he washed down the smoke of it with a tremendous balloon of cognac remarking, "Man's drink, brandy. I'm a man's man, you know."

"Then what brings you to Tishy?" asked Bunty sweetly.

*"A bit under the weather, Lady B?" he said. "What's up? Anything I can do about it?"*

"Oh, Harry and I were just on a flip round the Continent—and it seemed as good a place to stay the night as anywhere. We only left Havre about ten. Averaged sixty all the way. Not including stops, of course."

Meanwhile, the Countess Stourbridge was already threatening her post-prandial walk.

"This music," said she to the attentive Pollock, "always gets on my nerves. It prevents me from sleeping. And in my condition sleep is absolutely imperative. Now a little fresh air after food, I find has precisely the opposite effect. It calms the gastric juices. Bunty——"

"Yes, mother."

"I wonder if you'd mind getting me my wrap?"

"But you're sitting on it."

"Oh, am I?" And Bunty's mother rose.

"Going for a stroll?" trumpeted Sinclair, then. "Good idea. Nothing like plenty of exercise. And the atmosphere of this place is getting positively mephitic."

A moment later, the four of them, duly bowed to by an attentive concierge, were outside.

The moon was shining outside, and away beyond the trees twinkled the lights of the Casino. Pollock offered the mother an

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pace or so.

"It's just a job," he answered, modestly.

"But a man's job."

And that he did not deny

Indeed, he elaborated on it, till Pollock joined them, saying, "Your mother feels it a time she went to bed I'll walk her back to the hotel and join you later By the way she says you're not to stay up too late either

But, as a matter of warm fact, it was three o'clock of an early July morning before Major Roy Sinclair of Cape Remittance, and the last of the Three Disgraces returned to the Hotel Splendide Majestic et Excelsior —alone

III

IT was past nine when the last of the Three Disgraces awoke to a perfectly clear recollection of—once more to use her own phraseology—'a distinct binge. But what troubled her was not so much the faint headache which inevitably followed such a binge as a very faint heart-ache which unlike the headache, increased while she dressed

He's off again this morning she thought while she dressed "I'll never see any more of him. And I want to see more of him. He's a real man Even though he is so—so beastly enterprising.

And, so thinking she hurried down into the hall where she found the smooth-faced Pollock very dapper in white ducks

Morning said the smooth-faced Pollock I hope you forgive me for not joining you again last night The fact is I got rather sleepy And, asked the significance of his attire, which seemed hardly suitable for high-speed motoring he went on casually Oh we've decided to stay another night. Lord Roberts wants to try his luck at the baccarat tables.

Lord Roberts? queried Bunty

Oh, we always called old Sinclair that at Downchester

Why?

But before Pollock could explain, Sinclair himself bore down on them, trumpeting, 'Hallo, Lady B You're about bright and early Looking fresh as a daisy too What about an iced *ejao*? Crème-de menthe, I should say *Ejao* is the Malay for it Have you ever been in Malay? Great spot Man's country But not a patch on Cape Remittance

And when Bunty, shivering a little at the mere idea refused a drink he insisted,

Well then, come along to the garage and have a look at my Bug.

The garage of the Hotel Splendide Majestic et Excelsior is situate at some distance from that majestic hostelry Walking thither, through crowds already a-flock towards the Itshy-water fountains, the big-game hunter continued his trumpeting

Mangy-looking lot of foreigners,' trumpeted he. "Wouldn't like to take any of them on *safari*

'On what?'

*Safari*. Hunting Expedition. Eighty pounds a man. Twenty miles a day And as though to demonstrate his contempt for all who could not walk twenty miles a day with eighty pounds on their shoulders Sinclair drew a purple bandana from the pocket of his red-lined shooting coat and blew his nose with such a further fanfare that the Lady Bunty nicknamed him 'My Bull Elephant on the spot

"You are like a Bull Elephant, you know," she said, just as they reached the garage

I'm certainly a man's man, if that's what you mean,' he retorted

So you said last night," smiled the Lady Bunty 'Several times. That's what's making me wonder —and she hesitated a long second, the dark lashes just veiling her blue eyes— what really made you decide not to go away to-day

Can't you guess?' asked the Bull Elephant

You're not trying to suggest, are you this time the blue eyes were wide open— that *I* had anything to do with it?

To which he replied, without the slightest hesitation 'You damn well know you did you little devil

And this technique being entirely new to the Lady Bunty occasioned a certain shyness, also entirely new

For the first time since she had left the nursery she felt "positively girlish," and positively at a loss for an answer

Care for a flip round?" he asked casually

I I don't think so

Why not? Don't you trust yourself with me? What do you think I'm going to do? Carry you off or something?'

Don't be silly I just don't happen to like racing cars

Why? Are you afraid of them?"

And dared thus the Lady Bunty had no option but to climb in

He climbed in after her started his engine with a roar that set the whole garage shaking, and shot out of it, hooting in a cloud of blue smoke

In the town, she noticed, he drove with due care, even jamming on his brakes— and so hard that she only just saved her knees from the dashboard—to avoid a scavenging cat But once on the open turnpike he put his foot down till the wind whistled through her unhatted hair

Frightened?" he asked, with the speedometer-needle at eighty

No, she lied

Glancing at her sideways he throttled

up to ninety saw her lips set and her face go white 'Teach her to lead me up the garden!' he thought and, with the needle quivering towards the hundred her nerve gave

That's enough," she gasped Please And instantly he was slowing, chuckling to himself as he did so Then, still chuckling he stopped

There was no other car in sight, only the road running on and on, straight as a railway track between the high acacias. He put an arm round her drew her to him, made to kiss her

That'll teach you you little devil he said

But his mouth only found the back of her hand pressed hard against her lips to save them from him Neither was there any fear in her when she said a moment or so later " This he-man stuff's awfully *démodé*, you know It went out in nineteen-thirty, even on the talkies.'

And yet last night he began to argue

Last night," admitted the Lady Bunty was different I was all, binged up And besides, you amused me This morning you bore me

Which was also a lie—and retracted by cocktail-time when, in answer to his direct question " Do you want me to go tomorrow?" she admitted again with that touch of shyness, " No At least I don't think so. It all depends

What on?

On how you behave yourself'

For by then—and how much this had to do with the sudden eclipse of her publicity how much with the diabetic dullness of Tishy-les-Bains or how much with the fact that the Bull Elephant's technique was so entirely different from, shall we say Sir Debonnaire de Midward's, is immaterial to the story—the last of the Three Disgraces, Jake Mavis and Gaynor before her was also, and also almost without warning in love

## IV

HER attack of Mansmanitis, as she called it, was, Bunty admitted to herself after three more days of his society, 'definitely the worst so far' She was in love with the man But that she might be sufficiently in love with him for the resultant matrimonial obscurity and of all places at Cape Remittance, whither he was due back at the end of September—had not yet crossed her mind

The thing, so far, was just an affair one of whose various kicks" came from a certain sense of inferiority, caused mainly by the Bull Elephant's extraordinary nerve

She had always prided herself on her own nerve But just as the Bull Elephant had succeeded in cracking her courage in his racing Bugatti so he succeeded at the swimming-pool, where he dared her to dive backwards from the top board, and on the tennis-court where she was afraid to stand up at the net (she had to play in sun-glasses) to his terrific, if somewhat erratic forehand, and during a certain climb they took among the mountains that surround Tishy, when he urged her, vainly, to follow him along a narrow rock-ledge and up a difficult crag

And on that last occasion, he made use of the phrase. " You're a lovely little devil, and up to point you've got pluck but you'd never make a mate for a real man Lady B. Which phrase—one cannot help feeling in view of the young lady's general contrariness—first put the idea of marrying him into her head

Anyway, she let her imagination toy with it, gingerly at first, then definitely And the more she toyed with the idea, the more it appealed

That the man was a bit of a bounder she admitted But secretly she'd always liked bounders They were so colourful They were so—romantic

Wherefrom to the headlines, " Loveliest Society Girl's Romance,' The Lady Bunty Stourbridge's Romantic Engagement. Well-known Beauty to Marry Famous Big-game Hunter,' was scarcely an imaginative step

But between imagination and fulfilment—it grew clear to the Lady Bunty thinking the matter over with some care in her virginal chamber at the Hotel Splendide Majestic et Excelsior—were, first, that sense of inferiority (she still had her pride, you will observe), secondly, the technique she had hitherto employed and thirdly (the thirdly —she felt—arising out of the secondly), the stark fact that except by the use of that one phrase her Bull Elephant had no more suggested matrimony than Debonnaire de Midward

That evening accordingly—the eighth of their acquaintance—she adopted entirely new tactics, murmuring, as they strolled together under the trees towards the Casino,

Don't call me little devil any more Please Because I'm not. And I I can't bear you to—to think things about me. I haven't been playing with you, I swear I haven't Or leading you up the garden

And that night she only let him kiss the top of her head saying as they parted near her bedroom door, " Nonsense, my dear Of course you're not in love with me You're too much of a man's man for that You're just out for a bit of fun before you go on *safari* again."

To which, not varying his tactics at all the Bull Elephant retorted, "Well, I shouldn't care to take you on *safari*. You'd probably scream the tent down every time you heard a hyena laugh.

Exasperating her beyond speech

"I'm not a coward," she thought closing her door on him with a bang. "And I hate him. And I'd rather live on Menu Number One all my life than marry him.

Next day, however, she was not so sure. For next day arriving [illegible] about lunch-time, whom should she encounter but Sir Debonnaire de Mulward in the company of a young woman [illegible] platinum blondness [illegible] her own natural gold appear [illegible] and whom he had [illegible] to pronounce as his fiancée.

*"What about going backwards off the top board?" he said. "Still funking it?"*

V

THE precise psychological reaction of this meeting on the Lady Bunty is a little difficult to estimate. But the fact remains that, once Sir Debonnaire and his platinum-blonde niece had lunched and departed she took to her room again—and did not emerge till cocktail-time, looking, as the Bull Elephant told her the moment she entered the bar, 'A bit under the weather Lady B. What's up? Anything *I* can do about it?'

"You?" asked Bunty, a little off guard. Then, quickly, 'But I'm not under the weather. What on earth makes you think so? Besides, the weather's too marvellous. We're going to have another perfectly divine sunset.'

And it was while they watched that sunset together that he said, varying his technique for the first time, "Look here, did I upset you by anything I said last night? If I did, I'm most awfully sorry."

And a little later he said, one of his huge hands on her shoulder, "Well, if it comes to that, you weren't quite fair either. I'm not denying I was out for a bit of fun to begin with. Who wouldn't have been? But since I've got to know you better——"

Just at the very moment, however, when he was on the brink of saying the rest, the Lady Bunty's pride intervened, telling her, and very definitely, 'Don't let him. Because you haven't got the nerve to say No.' And if you say 'Yes' you'll only feel like a worm.

That night moreover even the top of her head was denied to him, and all next day, though by then he had got as far as, I haven't any real use for the modern girl. She's too many, for my taste. What *I* say is, a man's a man and a woman's a woman. And one can't expect *her* to do the tiger-shooting, she managed to prevent him from actually proposing.

Because, even if one could make up one's mind to orange-blossoms, St. Margaret's, Westminster, and that "resultant matrimonial obscurity" in Cape Remittance, one

wasn't going to be perpetually on the grovel to the kind of husband who said

Now don't be nervous, sweetheart, I'm only going out to bag a brace of rhinoceroses (or was it rhinoceri?)' before it fell.

And who—thus, her imagination seemed to foreshadow very clearly—would one day be saying: 'The little wife's rather highly strung for this kind of life, that's why I don't take her up-country with me,' to some strong-kneed exploreress in khaki shorts.

Which brings us, more or less directly, to that moment twenty-four hours later, when the Lady Bunty Stourbridge—standing vacant-eyed at the window of their sitting-room—answered her mother's vague 'You seem to be in some trouble, dear. It isn't like you to be so silent. I hope your lover's all right,' with the astonishing question 'Who is Lord Roberts?" and reproved for her ignorance, continued, 'Well, how was I to know? I was only three, then, and we never learned any history after the Reformation", listening, nevertheless, with a daughterly dutifulness as rare as it was raptly attentive, till the random reminiscences were done.

Shortly whereafter, the last of the Three Disgraces summoned the concierge of the Hotel Splendide Majestic et Excelsior secretly to her bed-chamber, and, having explained her desire (with the customary financial accompaniment) was told, "It will be difficult. It may be impossible. These things do not happen every day. But milady can assure herself that I will do my best."

## VI

DESPITE the fact that Major Roy Sinclair had made a desire to try his luck at the tables his original excuse for remaining on at Tishy, he had not, hitherto, carried out his threat to "break their five-franca bank." And of this shortly after her interview with the concierge the Lady Bunty took the liberty of reminding him.

'I believe they play quite high," she said meaningly.

'Not too high for me,' he snorted. 'When I gamble the sky's the limit.' And after dinner he insisted on her accompanying him into the baccarat room at the Casino, where also he demonstrated his nerve to the tune of francs fifteen thousand in good French cash.

The Lady Bunty, however—it may be mentioned in passing that she had already assured herself in a short conversation with the smooth-faced Pollock of the Bull Elephant's comparative solvency—displayed little interest in this performance. And after it was over, she insisted on an immediate return to the hotel.

'I'm feeling terribly sleepy," she said, but just before they parted at the door of her bed-chamber she smiled her sweetest on him promising, "Of course I'll be at the pool to-morrow morning. But I may be a little late. Mother and I have got some shopping to do. So don't wait for me."

Whereupon, still refusing even a good-night kiss, she withdrew herself—but not to sleep.

She was far too excited, and far too anxious, and far too much in love, for sleep. And dawn found her still wakeful, thinking: 'Supposing the concierge can't! Supposing I'm wrong. Supposing it doesn't work. Will I still marry him? How can I? With that ridiculous superiority complex of his!'

The waiter who brought her coffee, nevertheless—ordered by telephone, immediately after the concierge's discreet knocking, at the unusual hour of eight—found her comparatively calm. "*Encore du lait, milady*," said the waiter. "*Mais certainement, milady*." And the page-boy who subsequently handed her, carrying a large hat-box, into one of the Tishy-les-Bains *fiacres* was rewarded with five good francs—a tip quadrupled in favour of the senior attendant at the bathing-cabins, who displayed a certain reluctance at the hat-box carrier's request.

'Is it a joke?' asked the senior attendant at the bathing-cabins.

It is, the Lady Bunty assured him.

But the more she pondered, while undressing in her own cabin, the precise inwardness of that joke, the less jocular it appeared. Supposing she was wrong. After all, the way he'd jammed on his brakes didn't prove anything.

By which time she was already in her bathing-costume, with the hands of the big clock behind the diving-boards pointing five minutes to ten.

She had a dip then and, emerging, lay down to sun herself. There were very few people at the pool so far. A pity. Five minutes more, however, brought the first, and another five minutes the second omnibus from the town. Fiacres, and private cars, too, were starting to arrive. And just as she had turned on her back she heard Pollock's smooth, 'What, here already, Lady Bunty. Your shopping can't have taken very long."

Then hugely, the Bull Elephant's shadow blocked the sunlight, and he trumpeted down at her. 'What about going backwards off the top board to-day! Still funking it? Wait till I get out of these duds, and I'll take you up there.'

But the last of the Three Disgraces made

no answer, only blinked up at the pair of them, thinking, "Now!"

Pollock who never bathed lit himself a cigarette and sauntered slowly towards his own cabin. Turning on her left elbow she watched him approach the blue-and-yellow door.

"A good chap," said Pollock, softly. "Straight as a gun-barrel. Brave as a lion. And he's bound to come into the title one of these days. If I was in your place——"

At which precise moment, the blue-and-yellow door opened outwards and closed inwards, shutting Sinclair from their sight.

"If you were in my place," said the last of the Three Disgraces then—and she, too, spoke softly—"you wouldn't want a man to be *too* brave."

And at that precise moment both heard the first howl.

The first howl, more surprise than actual terror only just carried through the barred window of the Bull Elephant's cabin. But the entire pool heard the second, and the third might almost have been audible to the Countess Stourbridge at the mile-away Hotel Splendide Majestic et Excelsior. For by then the Bull Elephant was backing wildly through the reopened door.

"Attendant," howled the Bull Elephant—white as his Siamese relation—from that re-opened door. "Attendant! Come here. There's one of the horrors—there's a whole litter of the blind, crawling, milk-sucking horrors in my cabin. And they've got to be removed. They've got to be removed at once, I tell you."

IT was not the attendant however, but the last of the Three Disgraces who, rising swiftly, and favouring him with one glance of supreme surprise as she did so, passed to the howler's cabin—emerging thence with the protestant mother in her arms.

"Poor pussums," cooed the last of the Three Disgraces. "Did big brave man frighten poor pussums and her ickle kittens."

Then turning to the Bull Elephant, still very white about the gills though he had ceased from howling, she said, "It's only a cat. I'll hold her while you get the kittens out—the wee things haven't even opened their eyes yet."

But in the Bull Elephant's eyes was panic, and his huge hand shook as he motioned her from him stammering. "Take it away. Take it away and drown it. Drown the lot of 'em."

"Backwards off the top board?" asked the Lady Bunty, sweetly. "I'm afraid that wouldn't be much appreciated by the other bathers." Then, lowering her voice so that even Pollock could not overhear, she went on, "So that's why you were nicknamed Lord Roberts at school. Because you were afraid of cats. Just fancy! My Bull Elephant afraid of cats."

Nor did the Lady Bunty, being a real woman, even dream of admitting that, for all her disappointment at the rotten exhibition you made of yourself, and in front of all those mangy foreigners, too," she might still forgive a real man his one weakness until yet another sun was setting over the majestic and excellent splendours of Tishy, and then only on the express condition, "That you leave off snorting and trumpeting at me every time I've got sense enough not to do something dangerous."

Demanding as pledge for the continuous fulfilment of that condition, and supplementary to the customary emerald-cut diamond, a certain bracelet—which you can actually see, should you doubt any detail of this veracious story, encircling her left wrist in any of the thousand pictures taken of her as she emerged, all teeth and orange blossoms, on her husband's arm from St. Margaret's, Westminster.

The bracelet, needless to add, being of cat's eyes. "And I'll wear it always, darling, even when I come on *safari* with you, just as a reminder. We'll have fun, though won't we, all alone in the jungle on *safari!*"

"We're all alone now, you little devil," said the Bull Elephant.

And that time her hand did not defend her lips.

fascination is inherent in Lost Causes. What is the explanation of this psychological fact? Why should a lost cause live so hardily in the future when it has failed in the past? The answer may be that mankind is more sentimental than successful. Many people can more easily imagine themselves being noble in a lost cause than in sharing the faded triumphs of arrogant or complacent victors. Moreover, the success of all the winning causes has not yet led the world out of misery and confusion. Great advances have been made; but they are not in many cases attributable to the decision of the famous struggles of history. Other unseen unnoticed, intangible forces and tendencies have seemed to shape the destinies of man more powerfully than his conscious, definite choices. The lost cause passes into the sanctity of the tomb, free for evermore from new reproach. The winning cause is saddled with the responsibilities of the future. History is replete with examples of the failure of success, and how often underneath the passing splendours of victory and domination have forces re-gathered which have in the long run effected the success of failure!

"*Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed*

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# IN LOST CAUSES

## WINSTON CHURCHILL

*victa Catoni.*" "The gods are for the winning, but Cato for the Lost Cause" This line of Lucanus has carried comfort to many proud wounded bosoms. Freed from the world's unrelenting cares and misfortunes, imagination may build Valhallas in which lost causes reign in airy serenity over brighter and better worlds than that in which we toil and blunder

The figure of the valiant champion of a lost cause faithfully struggling to the end against irresistible odds, "greatly falling with a falling State," appeals to our romantic sentiments. But more, it stirs those profound instincts upon which stand the grandeur and dignity of the human race. We rejoice that there were great unyielding souls who fought their quarrels out to the end Even where the winning cause seems to have been indisputably the best for the world, we feel we owe them a debt scarcely less than that which we have so amply paid to the prosperous warriors. Their lives, their deeds, their agonies, are gazed upon with emotion and honour by countless generations who are quite glad their heroes did not have their own way

Let us then turn haphazard the pages of the past, and glance at some of the personages recorded in the lists of failure.

We do not know enough of the disputes between Cain and Abel to judge this long-decided issue impartially. Undoubtedly Cain killed Abel; but Abel—if we knew the whole story—may have been very provoking. He may have been a pitiless usurer who got Cain into such a position that flesh and blood could stand it no more. For years he may have ground him down and bled him white. Finally, he may have presented him with some demand which left him no choice but ruin for his loved ones or a violent blow. Which was the lost cause here? Abel died and Cain conquered. He conquered only to gain a curse.

We must descend to personages about whom we have some fuller information. There is no lack. Hector, Demosthenes, Hannibal, Mithridates, Jugurtha, Sulla, Cicero, Vercingetorix, the Emperor Julian, Stilicho, the Cid, Harold, Charles the Bold, Thomas More, Guatemotzin, Atahualpa, Charles V, Mary Tudor, Charles I, Constantine, Palæologus, George III, Marie Antoinette, Metternich, Napoleon, Wellington, Lee, Ludendorff. But any reader can add competitors to this list.

TAKE Demosthenes. He had made for himself an ideal out of the Greek past for which there was really no defence except in his oratory. He strove to maintain an Athens floating in a divine hegemony, the Queen of the Hellenic commonwealths, binding her daughters to her not by the rods of Empire but by a sublime culture. Greek must not oppress Greek. All were to flourish in harmony, all were to present a solid front against the barbarian. And then Philip of Macedon began to trouble these ideal conditions. All Greeks were equal, equally glorious, but unfortunately, Macedon was more up-to-date in military tactics, nay, also in the slow craft of diplomacy. Macedon advanced upon the Greeks alike with Phalanx and with Fraud. Demosthenes felt passionately that tyrants, even good tyrants, were un-Greek. Against the pitiless encroachments of Philip and the vain intrigues of the Greek senate he delivered the magnificent Orations. Philip kept jogging and edging along.

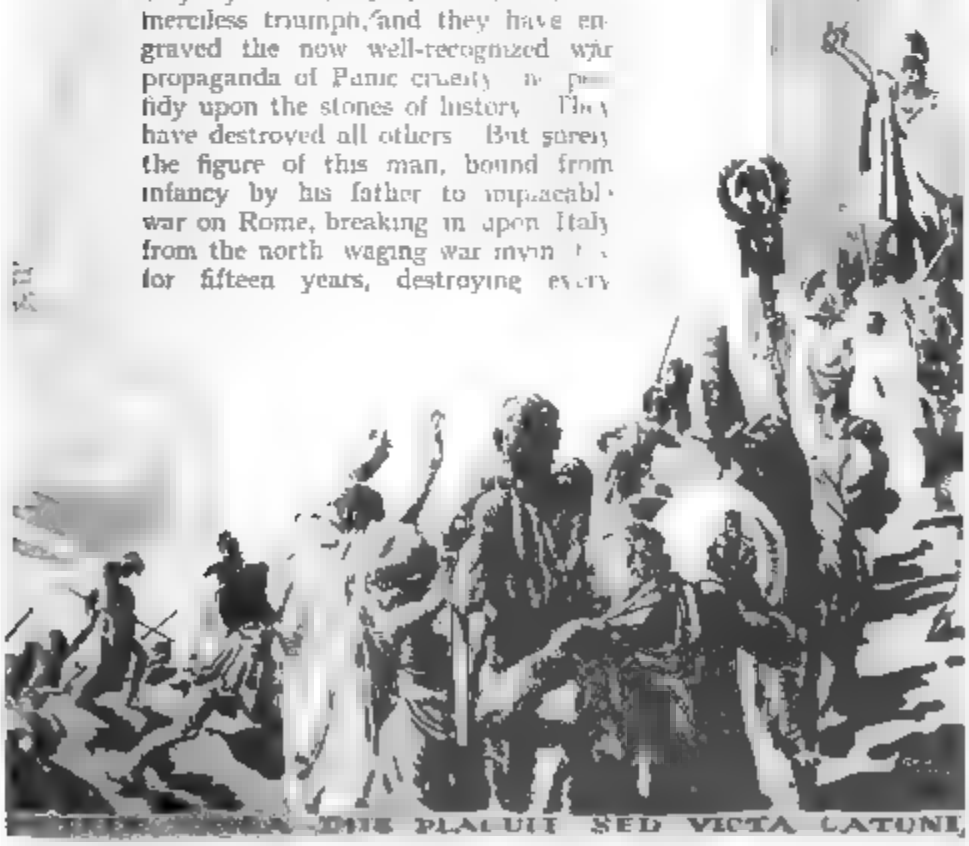
Demosthenes was the first great lawyer to enter politics, and was thus gradually sucked into the whirlpools of action. Whiggery is when a party or nation adopt or rest on a specialized mode of thinking. Demosthenes was a Whig. Sooner or later all good thinking is challenged by better thinking or more often by sharper action. Sharper action often wins. Philip forged ahead and gradually enslaved the Greek world. Demosthenes met his intrigues and force of arms with eloquence, but the sword beat the word. The word was potent enough to unite Thebes and Athens, but Philip broke both Thebes and Athens at Chæronea. Demosthenes saw from the beginning the weakness of his side. Fighting Philip, he said, was like pitting amateurs against professional boxers. The amateurs were knocked out. The gentlemen were beaten by the players. But are we to say "It served them right"? Perhaps we ought to. Still how much poorer was the world when the ideal of pan-Hellenic freedom, culture, and mutual inter-dependence perished.

The arguments of Demosthenes and the resistance of Athens became the anvil upon which the sword of Alexander the Great was whetted. The liberal conception—noble, although unconsciously founded upon domestic slavery—was cast down. Imperialism strode in disdainful pride and majesty through the world. Demosthenes was driven into prison and exile. Hunted in his sanctuary, he found escape only by poison. Still, his glory matches that of his conqueror Alexander. The surge of his orations stirs men's minds to-day, while who cares for the victories of Alexander?

Hannibal was a loser of a different type. He lived in the realm of action

He has left us scarcely a fragment of his mind. We can only gape at the prodigy of his deeds. Any records which he or his people left have been expunged. We only know of him from the pages of his foes. But it is from the Roman Livy, marked across the generations by the sense of fear and tragedy, that the greatness of Hannibal emerges. Hannibal's cause was not only that of Africa but of Europe against the coming power of Rome. Perhaps it was even wider—whether the Mediterranean and all that centred around it should be ruled by an Aryan or a Semitic race.

The picture of Hannibal and indeed of Carthage, has been drawn for us only by the victors in their days of merciless triumph, and they have engraved the now well-recognized war propaganda of Punic cruelty and perfidy upon the stones of history. They have destroyed all others. But surely the figure of this man, bound from infancy by his father to implacable war on Rome, breaking in upon Italy from the north waging war mysteriously for fifteen years, destroying every

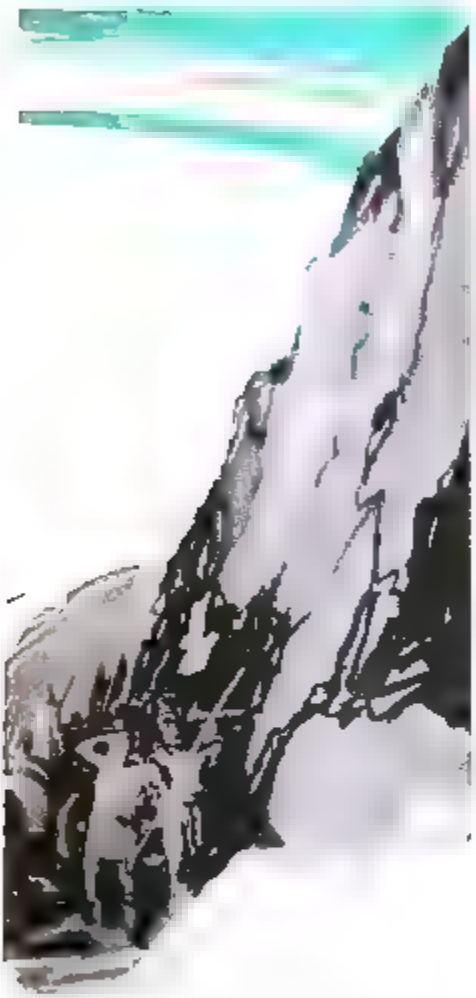


VICTRIX CAUSA DIIS PLACUIT SED VICTA CATONI

army that met him in the field until finally recalled to Africa to save the homeland, is without its equal in martial achievements of men. We know so little of his character. It is only by the dints and splinterings of the shields he smote that we can imagine the weight and sharpness of his sword. Still, here and there we have a glimpse of the human being behind these terrible manœuvres.

It is the morning of Cannæ. Hannibal is riding along the lines of his army. An officer upon his staff or in his entourage, named Gisco, gazing across the plain at the enormous masses of eighty thousand Romans in battle array, expresses inopportunely his awe at their great numbers. "Yes, Gisco," says Hannibal, turning in his saddle with gleaming sardonic eye, his whole being poised for its impending supreme function, "but there is something more wonderful still. Not one of them is called Gisco." We can almost hear the laughter of the fierce group of Carthaginians.

The fibre of this man bearing up victorious against every misfortune, with stinted slender resources, with mere levies replacing professional troops betrayed and undermined from home,



and the sure, natural, nascent strength of Rome lapping him on every side, must have been tenser than any we have been told about.

Poison for him too was the last manœuvre. We all rejoice that Rome beat Carthage. The Roman records make it clear that we should do so. But when every tribute has been paid to Fabius Maximus Cunctator and Scipio Africanus, in all that supreme drama, it is Hannibal who bears the palm. We would all much rather meet him than either Fabius or Scipio.

Personally, I have also always been much attracted by the elephants plodding ponderously through the blizzards and avalanches of the Alpine passes, playing their part faithfully in so many battles, at last tested too hard and put to flight at Zama—like tanks turning against their own army. One hopes they did not suffer too much. There are so few elephants and so many men. They terrified the elephants with hideous blare of metallic noises; they cut their soft trunks with swords, they stuck javelins in scores into their unprotected stomachs, and the elephants tried very hard to be faithful, but the limit was reached for the elephants. And here also theirs was a lost cause. The men won.

Someone ought to write well about these battles and make us see exactly what happened and why. They are much more interesting than the battles of the Great War, which were mainly shells and bullets lashing and whipping up the mud for years on end, and every now and then destroying drenched, crouching men. No, Trasimenus, Cannæ, Zama—these are the tableaux.

The Emperor Julian, called the Apostate, contended in another sphere. Bred a Christian, he set himself to restore the old indolent poetic dreams and mysteries of pagan mythology and folk lore. Not by tortures or butcheries did he oppress the new religion; he sought to make it unfashionable, unprofitable, inconvenient. Rather heavier taxes, some disabilities in public office, shafts of ridicule and satire, vulgar prejudice, governmental disfavour coldly applied—these were his weapons. He was master of the world, and a formidable antagonist. But the world was very miserable. The great majority of men were slaves. In their sorrows they sought consolation. The old gods had nothing to send them from Olympus. The nymphs and fauns, the deities of every spring and dell and grotto gave back only in echoes and murmurs the passionate gasps of suppressed pain which loaded the air. The world needed a creed of facts,

and the most astonishing array of facts ever propounded to human minds were already before them.

Over all this scene the philosophers spread their cobwebs of speculation But who cared for them? There are times when the world rests on speculation for its religion, but this was a time when it hungered for facts. In the whole pagan mythology there was not a single fact which could contend either with the philosophers or with that pure and humble religion which made the slave in spirit the equal of the Emperor, which turned suffering into joy, which vanquished hate by love, which made torment bliss, and death a glorious immortality

When Julian died in battle against the Parthians he was only thirty-two. His profoundly-conceived social and political measures against the Christians had not had a full trial They had undoubtedly produced far more adverse effects upon the new religion than the brutalities and bestialities of other persecutions But the ancient gods he loved so well must have loved him no less. They withdrew their champion from a forlorn contest. He was an uncertain symbol in an age of change. He combined Roman virtues with Greek graces. Ruler, warrior, æsthete, philosopher his day was done Still, he was the most redoubtable opponent encountered by Christianity in the Roman world

We ought at this point to say a word about Canute, who championed the lost cause of trying to stop the tide from coming in His line is by no means extinct to-day. In later years we have had Mrs. Partington and her broom against the Atlantic Ocean Modern Mrs. Partingtons are in earnest, but Canute was only teaching foolish courtiers a lesson

All causes that were not the cause of Rome were destined to be lost The central power once dominant could only grow; and all the outside forces could only shatter themselves against Rome as enemies, or augment the strength of Rome as vassals. Several great dim figures loom up through the shadows of eclipse Here again we can only judge of the anti-Roman cause from the Roman tale. Jugurtha delivered Numidia from the Roman yoke; and for a space defended Numidian freedom. The pen of Sallust has preserved his memory, no doubt distorted by the prejudices of the conqueror The scornful gibes which Jugurtha uttered as the swelling Roman tides gathered about his country have survived and endured He labelled Rome "*urbem venalem*" a city for sale, but Rome, her strength and corruption growing together disposed of him so effectually that only this one taunt has remained to mark the quarrel.

VERCINGETORIX has gained a larger fame. The cause of Numidia was soon dead The cause of the Celts stirs the world to-day Usually beaten, never conquered, unsuccessful and irrepressible, stricken but immortal the Celtic race contend to-day in every field Vercingetorix was the only Celt who drew together in one nation-conscious organization against Cæsar and his legions all the blue-eyed, red haired warriors of Gaul. It was written of the Celts in those days that they always marched to battle and they always fell. Cæsar's dry-as-dust dispatches record the destruction of successive Gallic armies. When we summon to our minds the picture sculptured by Romans on their triumphal arches of these nomadic, shaggy and trousered warriors, with their herds of cattle and heavy ox-drawn waggons formed into fortified camps within which men, women, and children faced the worst that fortune had in store, we ask ourselves "Had they a cause?"

The Romans esteemed it as nothing They regarded the Gauls as mere barbarians, the easy prey of disciplined forces, fit only to be subjugated or

despoiled, and if recalcitrant, mutilated or enslaved.

What Europeans have done in Africa in the last two generations Rome did to the Gauls. How could tribalism, however valiant, prevail against the legions, with good finances and a coherent civilized state behind them? Cæsar subdued them tribe by tribe, almost village by village. Suddenly a princely rescuer arose. Vercingetorix by prowess and eloquence persuaded all Gaul to stand together. For eight years they waged war as a nation. It was a desperate war; almost as hard and as cruel as any fought out on the globe. It culminated in the long siege of Alesia, in which Vercingetorix had fortified himself. Cæsar reduced Alesia, . . the garrison with all their families perished by famine or the sword, or became the human chattels of their captors. Enthusiasm and devotion were proved to be almost helpless when pitted against good drill and a superior theme. Mommsen wrote, "Hannibal stands at the close of the Phœnician history and Vercingetorix at the close of the Celtic. They were not to save the nations to which they belonged from foreign yoke but they spared them an ignominious fall."

Here again no literature survives to tell us how the Celts viewed their cause. Of course, they wished to live free, happy, and glorious in the good lands into which they had found their way, and for this they fought to the death. But the idea behind them meant only a Europe unhabited in isolated sections. Each tribe could enjoy and glorify the arts of primitive warfare, could display chivalrous prowess and yield to the intoxications of poetry and ale. There was a rude culture sustained by Bard and Druid and recorded in [illegible]. But the nomadic cause was [illegible] high-spirited. Vercingetorix, preserved to be a feature in a Roman triumph, was strangled at the [illegible]. There was nothing more to be gained from him, not even the exhibition of

his misery But his soul and the souls of Gaul were marching along. Under the Roman rule Gaul became France, and France to-day leads Europe The lost cause has been retrieved To-day the boot is on the other leg, and no one doubts which of the two Latin races is the stronger

What Vercingetorix was to the French, Boadicea was to the British. Her statue chariot-borne stands opposite Big Ben to-day The late Mr Labouchere was sarcastic about this monument He complained that Boadicea held no reins with which to drive her horses, and he remarked that if the rest of her tactics were upon this level, he could not wonder that her armies suffered defeat There is no doubt efficiency counts for a lot The poets take their revenge upon it after they have been conquered, and the victors read the poetry, enjoy it thoroughly, incorporate it in their system, and believe they wrote it themselves.

I HAVE always had great sympathy with King Harold The problems which awaited him when he ascended the throne were almost insoluble but bold was the bid he made for life and power In an island defended only by local militias and the Royal Guards, a country open at every point to invasion from the seas, a country which had no speedy means of internal communications, Harold in 1066 had to await two separate invasions In the north the Norsemen were assembling their galleys and transports. In the south Duke William and the Norman chivalry prepared their descent Harold seemed to have taken every step which prudence, valour, and sound strategy could counsel. He exhorted the local militias of the threatened counties to take the field and put themselves into the best posture of defence. He remained himself in a central position with his famous house-carles. The first regular troops that England had ever produced these house-carles were mounted infantry They marched on ponies and they fought on foot They may have numbered six or seven thousand men Their marches were remarkable When the news of the Norwegian invasion arrived they hastened, with Harold at their head, to Yorkshire, where they animated and directed the local militias.

In the battle of Stamford Bridge on the 25th September the house-carles with their battle-axes hewed the Danes to pieces. Harold gained his first and last decisive victory There was no time to celebrate it The Normans had landed in the South Swift then, house-carles, on the road from York to Pevensey! Sometimes there was a road—often there were only tracks But the house-carles covered the distance of 270 miles in less than three weeks Harold arrived in time to confront the second invasion at Hastings on the 14th October

The British people have abandoned all partisanship about the Battle of Hastings. I think their hearts ought to be on the side of Harold I am all for Harold in battle and defeat Still, I could not bring myself to say, "I wish he had won" Such an assertion would challenge the foundations of a history with which the present inhabitants of the United Kingdom may well rest content Harold's cause was a dull one England might have remained a stolid country without romance, without ecclesiastic drama, without the spirit of adventure, without all those refinements which the French tongue already carried At the Battle of Hastings the advanced culture had the better tactics

In later years a modern Battle of Hastings has been fought about whether the English had a palisade or only their shields A great historian discovered the palisade, but smaller and more accurate commentators have proved him wrong. Harold had only infantry and battle-axes. The Normans

had archery, cavalry, and manœuvre History gives loud cheers for the primitive territorials who stood with the unyielding house-carles all day long against mailed missile-hurling adventurers. However, it was just as well they got the worst of it But here again the losing cause had its "come-back." Hereward might fight amid the marshes of East Anglia, but intermarriage was the unconscious strategy of the vanquished Once again Venus asserted her authority over Mars One could not expect Harold to have either the foresight or detachment for views of this kind in the tumultuous hours at Hastings which preceded his receiving an arrow in the eye The hours were tragic and terrible

IT would be pleasant to write about the Jacobites and the fall of the House of Stuart They never seemed to fit the English requirements We review them all James I, odious but crafty, Charles I, eyeing his judges with unaffected scorn, Charles II, restored his dynasty, given a second chance up-borne by the love of his people, spending it all with ladies and lap dogs, James II, ready to run all risks, make all sacrifices, inflict all punishments to compel Protestant England to cleave again to Rome, they none of them suited England

Modern historians attribute the troubles of these reigns largely to the influence of currency questions Precious metals had become more plentiful The value of money declined and prices continued to rise. The poor Kings had to conduct the administration and defence of the country on a fixed-income basis. They suffered as the middle classes are suffering now, but from opposite reasons They could not make both ends meet The Parliaments could not understand how monetary conditions had altered the entire economic and financial situation. They were quite as stupid in these matters then as they are now And they had not the benefit of our good statistics In measuring out the King's allowance they took no account of the rise in prices. They invited their Monarchs to "live of their own" These ill-starred functionaries found this very difficult The egregious Hampden has been glorified by history for the fine thought that inland counties ought not to be asked to pay taxes for the Fleet So the House of Stuart was eradicated from the British soil and the Hanoverians reigned in their stead Then in our time came all sorts of modern improvements—like big business and market speculation, and Jacobitism and its White Rose League became for ever a lost cause

In many ways General Robert E Lee presents one of the noblest instances of the champion of the lost cause History, impressed by his military genius and exalted personal character, gazes with puzzled and disdainful eyes upon his cause. We know that the Confederate soldiers who fought so bravely for the South were convinced that they defended the freedom and sovereign rights of their States We know that the abolition of slavery was never demanded by the North until the war had lasted for more than two years Nevertheless, the outstanding issue of that celebrated struggle was and must ever be the eradication of slavery from the North American continent So here we have, in conjunction with this glorious, virtuous, heroic figure, fighting with repeated success against enormous odds, a cause judged odious and squalid among men Nevertheless, as time has passed the fame of Lee and of his great lieutenants has outshone that of the victors. Their cause has vanished their country has been incorporated in the strong life of the American union, but their names gleam and glisten in the human story, and are among the dearest treasures of the United States

# FOLLOWING

In the opinion of his three sons, the appointment of Lt.-Col. Stanley Grannom to Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard marked him as a man high above his fellows. The appointment stood far higher, in their esteem, than promotion to the rank of Field Marshal. For, after all, soldiers are plentiful, but police are few. From a perfectly useful, if not outstanding parent, he had become, in a single day, a figure large with importance and illumined with the strong light of melodrama.

A fellow had every excuse for being proud of such a father. His name, intruded into conversations on the pleasant subject of crime, so dear to the heart of every schoolboy, became a name to conjure with. It afforded opportunity for dropping dark hints of an inner knowledge of criminal matters.

In behaving thus Colonel Grannom's sons did less than justice to their father's Masonic predilection for telling nobody anything. It must be confessed that this resolute refusal to open up and confide upon subjects that were torturing the curiosity of the entire civilized world was far from endearing. But it had to be faced.

At Colin, the middle son, was driven to observe:

"Dad never seems to get hold of anything until after it comes out in the papers."

The remark was typical of Colin, a facts little boy who never allowed imagination to distort or decorate obvious truths about people and things.

Kenneth, the eldest of the trio, was not entirely of the same mind. His imagination was always pretty active. It informed him that his father's reticence was inspired by knowledge of such fearful moment that life itself would be forfeit were he to divulge. To some degree, Kenneth patterned himself upon parental example. That is to say he embellished his reputation for being in the know with periods of strength and silence of the most exasperating kind. Being exasperating was one of Kenneth's privileges. Additional years gave him the right to look down with pity and contempt upon the follies of youth. He had even been known to patronize. Indeed, a day seldom passed when he did not patronize one or another of his brothers.

Of course, Rodney was quite hopeless—a grand kid and all that, but hopeless. The fruits of his imagination were of such a kind as to be indistinguishable from rank and deliberate falsehood. In Rodney's hands sober truth vanished like vapour. It was not so much that he set forth with the determination to lie as that facts refused to remain facts once he became possessed of them. For life to be tolerable to him, it had to be vivid. Dullness was his bugbear. To dissipate dullness was his mission. It was almost his creed. There was not a case on record of a single occurrence in his life that lost anything in the telling.

Of such infants poets are made, orators and, perhaps, politicians. Also they have a curious ability for stealing into the hearts of people—and staying there. But they do not develop into good chartered accountants.

It was Rodney who conceived the game or should one say the duty, of following people.

The idea arose out of his father's association with the Yard and the finest sleuth force in the world. The works of detective story writers helped to foster it. But no matter what its genesis may have been, it was an inspiration. Even Kenneth admitted that.

"The clever little darling," he said, which was praise enough to keep Rodney's chest puffed out for the entire day.

Colin was in favour of it, too, having a taste for solitary entertainments.

"You see," Rodney explained, working himself up to a fine frenzy, "you pick up somebody in the street—a villainous looking person—and dog their footsteps until they do something."

"What do they do?" Colin inquired.

"You find, something jolly bad, of course."

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# PEOPLE

Darleeng!" murmured Kenneth. He always took that tone in the presence of violence.

Colin felt the need of going deeper into the problem. He said —

And when *they've* done something, what do you do?

If you are a fool, you needn't show it by being *such* a fool," said Rodney, for practical questions always infuriated him. They spoilt the whole thing. He went on: "Just as if there weren't all these smash and grabs and bank hold-ups and post-offices. Even dad talks about them."

Kenneth laid the forefinger of his right hand upon his temple.

"There's something in what the little angel suggests," said he. "His words are weak and elementary, but they hold the skeleton of an idea."

Rodney addressed Colin.

"That's jolly good snubs to you."

But Kenneth was not prepared to support any cause of which he was not the leader without making himself fairly unpleasant as a preliminary.

"What's against it," he said, "is that it's obviously not a game for a kid like Rodney to play."

Rodney blazed up, indignantly.

"I'd like to know why not."

"Patience, Cherub, and you shall. In the first place it calls for a standard of intelligence that you do not possess."

"It's a jolly sight better one than yours."

"And in the second place," Kenneth pursued imperturbably, "if we are going out and coming home and just going to tell each other a lot of stinking lies about things that never happened, we might as well not do the thing at all."

The blow was shrewd and Rodney coloured.

"Who's going to tell lies?"

"You are."

"Why should I?"

"You shouldn't," said Colin, "but you always do."

It was just another of those infuriatingly logical remarks that make their subscription towards the dullness of life. Rodney filled his lungs to indict it.

"Just because nothing ever could happen to you doesn't mean that everybody else never has anything ever happen to them that couldn't happen to you."

Colin produced a pencil and a scrap of paper and tried to work it out.

"Fool!" said Rodney.

Kenneth rose.

"The meeting is adjourned," said he. "I will place my resolution before the special commission at a certain date."

Of course, it was most unsatisfactory from Rodney's point of view. But then they always were like that. He thought of something and then they wouldn't join in, or if they did join in it was always after the whole idea had gone stale.

To an immediate, an urgent nature like Rodney's, delays were agony. He simply couldn't get people to realize how important it was to do everything at once. His father and mother were just as bad. Look at the business over the new bicycle. It was absurd of them to say he could have it if he behaved well, when it was obvious that he would behave well if he got it.

But in the case of this particular game things developed rather quicker than he had reason to expect. Kenneth mentioned it to their father at breakfast in an offhand, non-committal sort of way.

I suppose, dad, there isn't anything to prevent a chap following whoever he likes to follow?"

The Colonel shrugged his shoulders.

# ROLAND PERTWEE

*Illustrated by* FORSTER

"I imagine not," he conceded. "But I fail to see any sense in the practice. It's more or less certain to end with a kick in the pants."

"Not if one was armed, dad," said Rodney. "One could have a bit of lead pipe in one's pocket and simply knock them silly. One would creep up behind and WHACK! Down they'd go."

The Colonel sighed. Silly, loose talk like that he found singularly trying.

"Darleeng," whispered Kenneth.

Then the Colonel rose and went out.

"I shouldn't," said their mother.

"Shouldn't what?"

"Follow people, dears. After all, it isn't as if it was any use, is it? Why not have a nice walk in Kensington Gardens."

The room emptied at the bare suggestion.

*The man stopped right opposite where the children were hiding. Suddenly his hand [illegible] and [illegible] a grimy purse.*

With imagination to enliven it, any event can assume a dramatic significance, but, judged from a purely practical standard, it cannot be said that the sleuthing undertaken by Colonel Grannum's sons yielded a very advantageous harvest.

A number of unforeseen factors entered into the chase which robbed it of much of its charm. Chief among these was a common tendency on the part of the pursued to enter a public-house at opening time.

It was Colin who was first to determine that evidences of chronic alcoholism on a human countenance did not necessarily bespeak the discovery of a habitual criminal. He was, therefore, the first to abandon the pursuit of this particular type.

As an alternative he elected to pursue any person who seemed to be in a hurry, on the theory that such a person might be supposed to be in full flight from the prickings of an uneasy conscience. The chase that ensued usually led to a railway station, and since Colin preferred to spend what

money he had in his pocket upon a little casual sustenance rather than on the purchase of railway tickets, the victim was allowed to escape unharmed

Kenneth, with an unsurpassed knowledge of sensational fiction, was rather more particular about the districts which he drew for malefactors. It may be said that he flew at higher game than his brothers. The zone of his activities was Mayfair and the West-end His brothers might be satisfied to run with a scratched-up pack of beagles, but Kenneth would only hunt with the Quorn. By the best literary authorities he had been informed that the real emperors of crime inhabited such places as the Ritz and the Carlton Grill In consequence, he haunted these places, and

even went to the length of entering one such place and commanding a waiter to bring him a dry ginger ale. It is a regrettable fact that the bull which accompanied delivery of the order was so outrageous as to rob Kenneth of his faculties for observation. It cut him so deeply to the financial quick that it is doubtful whether he would have noticed a murder committed at the next table. Pondering the matter at a later moment, he was driven to the conclusion that the waiter must have been in league with a notorious crook who desired to divert the attention of his pursuer from some nefarious act.

"I'll bet you that's what it was," he said to Colin, on a subsequent review of the affair.

Colin didn't seem to think so.

Rodney, of course, never drew a blank. No matter how unpromising the start, everything was hotsy totsy in the end. The range of impossible adventures that he recited after every excursion was unbounded. He could not behold an old lady airing her Pekinese without declaring that he had actually witnessed her steal the dog.

In the whole of his life Rodney had never engaged in any enterprise which made a more severe overdraft upon his own imagination and other people's credulity.

And so the game went on.

And then one day at breakfast Kenneth sprang a bombshell.

"We've been fooling around for a fortnight," said he, "and nothing on earth has happened to any of us."

"What you mean—nothing?" cried Rodney.

"Shut up. I mean nothing has happened and you jolly well know it. Well, I vote we call the whole thing off and go and see some footer."

If there was one thing that Rodney loathed it was to watch an organized game. Besides, had he not the day before invested five shillings in a periscope? A real late War periscope. With such an article of strategic furniture it was possible for quite a small boy to follow a suspect through a dense crowd in which he was seeking to escape. To talk of chucking things up after one had gone to the expense of buying an equipment like that was past endurance.

"It's a beastly rotten unsporting idea," he said. "Isn't it, dad?"

Colonel Grafton looked at his youngest.

"My dear boy, don't ask me. In my opinion it's a lot of nonsense, and I don't want to be bothered to talk about it."

Rodney shut his mouth on a hot retort. Somehow one didn't back-answer an Assistant Commissioner of the Yard.

Kenneth pursued:

"What's your idea, Colin?"

But Colin was more or less occupied in trying to empty the cream jug upon a huge pile of breakfast crisps. Rodney snatched the jug away in the forlorn hope of rescuing a spot or two of cream for himself.

"You would snitch the lot," he said.

Colin leaned back and stared at the ceiling for inspiration. His face assumed an expression of a man of forty.

"Wouldn't mind having one more shot at it. I had thought of trying along Holborn this morning, cos if nothing turns up you can always have a look at the models in Bassett-Lowke's. We could still see the footer in the afternoon."

"Right. That's a bet, then. But I give you fair warning if nothing happens to-day I mean to chuck it for good."

Rodney knew that it was no use to lose one's temper with Kenneth. The fellow with the longest vocabulary is an invincible antagonist.

"But look here," he said, "if something *does* happen you won't chuck it, will you? I mean if one of us does really pitch on a crook."

Colin shook his head and Kenneth looked at his youngest brother sadly.

"Darleeng," he said, "one of us *will*. And that one is going to be you and don't we know it."

Colin rescued them from the inevitable Rodney formula that began "Just because——" with a statement—

"Let's all meet here at lunch."

Ten o'clock was striking when the three bloodhounds parted at South Kensington station and went their separate ways.

By seven-thirty Kenneth was home again. He was through with it.

The arrival of Colin synchronized with the sounding of the gong for lunch. Apart from appetite he had nothing to report.

Rodney did not appear.

WHEN Rodney left his brothers at South Kensington, he wandered moodily in the direction of Onslow Square. His spirits were low and his heart was heavy. Even the periscope which he carried failed to inspire a mood of gaiety.

A childish soprano, percolating through the railings, attracted his attention. It came from a little girl whose name Mig was short for Margaret.

"Oo, Rod. Come and play," she invited.

Rodney mooched up to the railings and shook his head.

"Don't want to—can't—I'm following."

"You're always following," said Mig.

There was pique in her tone. Womanlike,

she may have thought it would have been more gallant had he followed her

"And anyway, there isn't anyone to follow," she said

It was true. Rodney sighed

"I'll come in for a minute."

Triumphantly Mig unlocked the gate of the square, for she had the key on a string round her neck. It was the sort of key there was a row about if you lost it

"What you got there?" she asked, and pointed at the periscope

Rodney explained.

"Any fool ought to have known without asking," he added

But Mig didn't mind being abused. She asked what it was for

"Looking over the tops of doors, of course"

"Still, we might hide in the bushes by the railings and watch people coming down the road"

Rodney had noticed before that girls now and then did have an idea. It was the most you could say in favour of them. In all other respects they were pretty sickening

"All right," he said, "but I'll do the looking and tell you what's going on"

"All right," she said

The bushes were dirty, but they didn't mind that. They afforded an admirable screen. From the roadway the watchers were invisible. Lying among some spears of iris was a grimy parcel wrapped up in a bit of cloth. Its appearance was not sufficiently inviting to awake any particular interest, although Rodney hazarded a passing view that it probably contained stolen rubies. Rather than allow this supposition to be dissipated and suffer the fate of most of his other theories, he forbade Mig to touch it

"A lot of stolen property is protected that way, you know"

"What way?"

"By wrapping it up in a shirt that somebody has died of the plague in"

"I don't believe it," said Mig

"Don't care whether you do or not. But my father ought to know and he said it was. Shut up, there's somebody coming"

The somebody proved to be a policeman. His measured tread was plainly audible to the children crouched in the bushes

When he had passed out of hearing, Rodney described what he had looked like. Perhaps the periscope gave a distorted impression, for according to Rodney he looked

"—as if he was jolly well going to pinch somebody at any instant"

Nothing very exciting happened during the next few minutes. An errand boy went by on a bicycle, with his handle-bar basket stuffed with stolen property, and no fewer than four motor-car thieves sped down the King's highway to the danger of life.

RODNEY was on the point of packing up and seeking fresh pastures, when something unusual really happened. It was a man, and he stopped right opposite where the children were hiding. At such close range Rodney did not dare to manipulate the periscope, whereby the most sensational part of the business escaped him and was witnessed by Mig alone. Having come to a halt, the man stooped and made some pretence of tying his shoe string. And suddenly his hand shot through the railings and fastened upon the grimy parcel. Mig distinctly heard it clink metallically as it struck a rail on its journey to his pocket. Then he straightened and continued his journey down the square.

"Oo!" gasped Mig, "he took it"

"Took what?"

"The Parcel, of course"

The periscope slipped from Rodney's fingers

"Fool!" he cried, on general principles, and snatching the key from her neck with violence enough to break the string, he ran like a galled hart for the gate

By the advantage of cutting off a corner, he let himself out of the square as the man he was pursuing turned into Sydney Place

He did not appear to be in a hurry, but proceeded in a leisurely fashion towards the Fulham Road

That his suspicions were in no way aroused was evidenced by the fact that he did not shed a single glance behind him

For this Rodney was duly grateful since it afforded him an opportunity of carrying out a swift, but effective disguise. Removing from his head a distinctive school cap of purple and green, he crammed it in his pocket and substituted a cap of Corin's at least three sizes too big for him. The chief disadvantage of this particular form of headgear was that it made visibility very low. To see anything at all it was necessary to throw back the head so far as nearly to destroy balance. But it possessed the virtue of concealing the features.

At the greengrocer's at the top of Pond Place the man in front stayed a moment to buy himself an apple. He was munching it as he walked down that narrow thoroughfare to St. Luke's Churchyard

It must be confessed that the purchase of the apple had rather a depressing effect upon Rodney. It marked his quarry as a man of simple and human instincts—the kind of man he might even grow into himself. To tell the truth, he could have eaten an apple himself without the least difficulty

His spirits were revived to see the man pause to set his watch from the church clock After that he went on through the pathway between the graves

As this particular spot was in the nature of open country Rodney gave his quarry a long start before starting in pursuit It was wise of him to bunch in with some other kids who were going the same way He did not part from their company until he saw the man turn into Upper Manor Street Less than a hundred yards ahead the street was intersected by the King's Road a crowded artery where it would be easy enough to lose the man altogether To avoid any such calamity Rodney shortened the distance between them and was actually at his victim s heels when he turned right and entered the post-office

It should be put on the credit side of Rodney s courage that he did not hesitate an instant in following The man went into one of the telephone booths as the doors swung behind Rodney There was but one thought in his mind to overhear that telephone conversation It was a case of curiosity outrunning fear The man s back was toward him and he was already dropping the required number of pennies into the slot

From the handle of the booth door hung a directory and towards that Rodney moved with the infinite stealth of an Indian guide Even more stealthy was the manner in which he opened the door a trifle under cover of looking up a number Providence was on his side inasmuch as the light within the booth was contacted by a floor switch rather than by an operation of the latch But for that minor mechanical fact the greatest adventure of his l fe would never have been played to a fin sh

Sam,' said a low voice, Joe here Yeh All set to go if you sez so No, couldn t make it under arf an hour Then look ere, meet you by the steps of the Mansion ouse seven-forty Yeh And Sam don t bother to bring nothing Yeh I picked up the tools in the square

Rodney did not wait an nstant He was out of the post-office and on top of a No 11 omnibus before the man had backed out of the boot

To have abandoned the pursuit and to have sped direct for the rendezvous was the most masterly piece of strategy he had ever contemplated The fact that he had not contemplated it is possibly the reason why he did not confuse the issue Rodney s strongest suit was spontaneity Given time to think he could be relied upon to muddle anything

The journey towards was enlivened by a bar of chocolate presented by an old lady who had bought it for her niece, but had succumbed to the seduction of Rodney's profile As luck would have it the old lady was not a confederate of criminals and the chocolate was singularly free from poison

For a wonder he did not confide in the old lady the object of his journey A new and wholly unusual reticence had descended upon him He was determined, for once in his life not to allow imagination to distort events that were still unenacted

With a hurried word of farewell he dropped from the omnibus at the corner of Cheapside and for some fifteen perilous seconds dodged the traffic that whirls in that circus of activity flanked on the south by the Mansion House

He arrived at the trysting-place ten minutes earlier than the appointment he had overheard on the telephone To Rodney ten minutes was an eternity It was time enough for him to be driven to admit to himself that he had forgotten every detail of the appearance of the man he had so successfully pursued All that remained with him was a vague impression of a shabby blue serge suit and a bulge of fat along the collar line of the man s neck Scanning the crowds that beset him he had no difficulty in finding at least a hundred persons who displayed similar characteristics

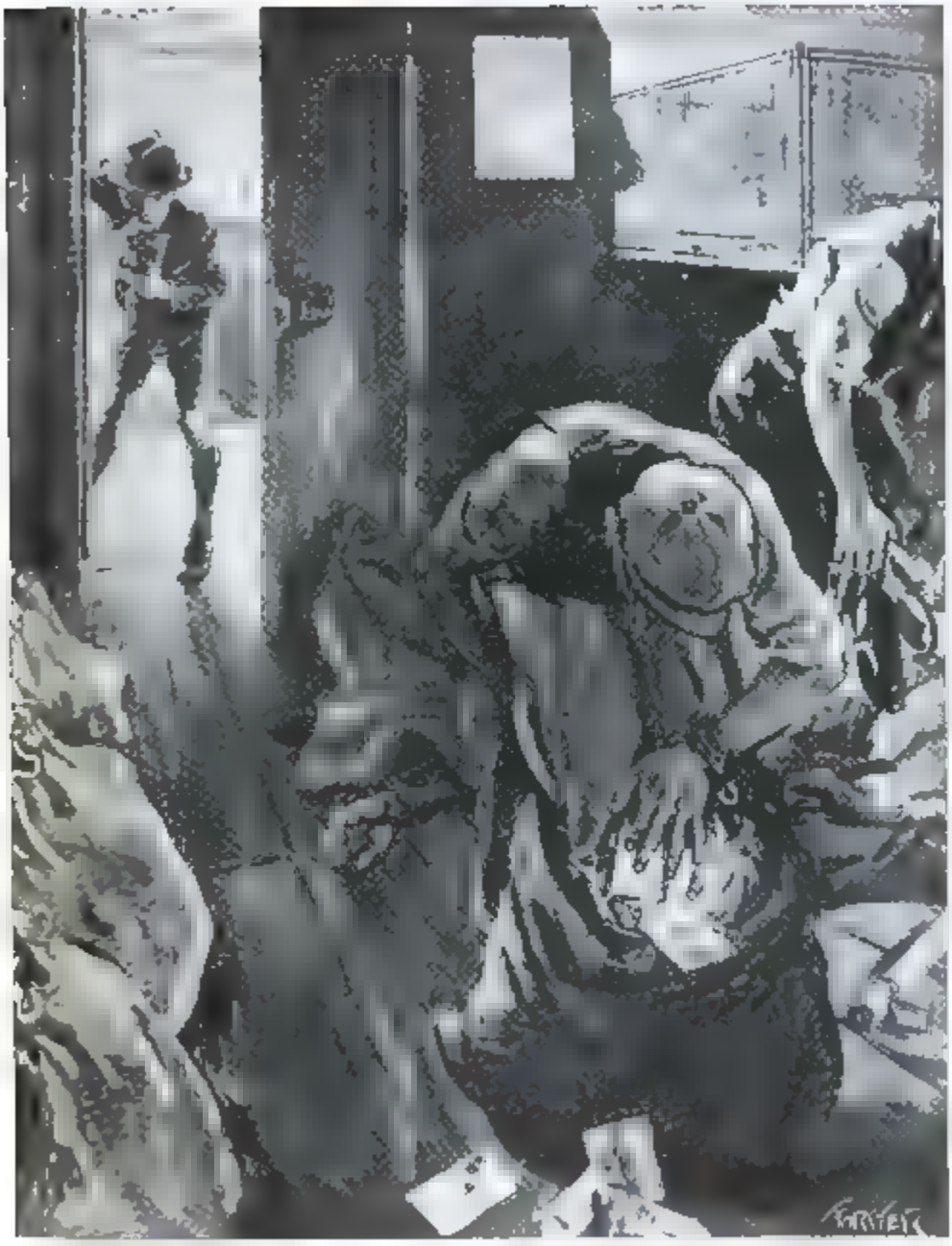
Six of the hundred were lounging idly by the Mansion House in expectation of meeting someone The problem of identifying the right man had therefore, assumed fearful proportions, and but for a stroke of memory was insoluble The stroke of memory concerned that parcel of tools which the man had thrust in the left-hand pocket of his jacket and to which he had referred in his conversation on the telephone Shifting his eyes from the face-line to the waistline of those who waited, Rodney had the satisfaction of picking out his victim The man was leaning against a lamp-post with an air of [illegible] He looked as if he had plenty of time and nothing to do Of his [illegible]

The hands of Rodney s wrist watch were standing at eleven forty five when a shabby [illegible] sorry bearing a few sacks of coal pulled up alongside the lamp-post Its [illegible] a sharp ferrety-featured youth [illegible] addressed a word to the villain of Onslow Square Rodney was near enough to catch the words, " Do you appen to know the shortest way to Water Row [illegible]

The villain scratched his chin to induce [illegible]

Yus, I know it, he admitted I was goin that way meself Simplest thing would be to op up and come with you

Then op up,' said the youth Whereupon the man hopped up and was lost to



*Lying upon the floor, among a quantity of sacks, was the figure of a postal clerk. In the gloom beyond two men were transferring the contents of a number of mail bags into a huge coal sack.*

view in the little sheltered cab of the lorry.

Save for a window some six inches square in the back of the cab, neither driver nor passenger were afforded a view of what took place among the coal sacks. It was not the first time that Rodney had indulged in a free ride nor was it likely to be the last. With the practice of hanging on to a tail-board he was familiar. The fact that the lorry was devoted to the transportation of coal did not discourage him. Dirt was no deterrent for he had not arrived at that time of life when he bought his own clothes.

In the City Rodney was geographically somewhat out of his depth and, indeed, he was more concerned to avoid attracting the attention of the police to his unofficial ride than in taking bearings of his position. The lorry proceeded in a north-easterly direction and turned up a narrow street on the right. A lucky glimpse, which proved to Rodney that they had entered a cul-de-sac, persuaded him to drop off on to the roadway. It was well for him that he did, for some forty or fifty yards further down the street the lorry went into reverse and faced the other way. While this was going on Rodney had his nose glued to the window of a pastry-cook's.

A couple of red mail vans, parked at the end of the cul-de-sac, convinced him that they had reached their objective and his heart began beating furiously. Whatever the object of the two men might be, here was the spot at which it would be carried out. From the corner of his eye Rodney saw them descend from the lorry and move swiftly up a narrow footway on the left. They had left the engine running, from which it might be argued that they were contemplating a swift retreat. Well, if Rodney was to be in at the kill it was now or never. But although Rodney had no less pluck than the average small boy, it must be confessed that, at this supreme juncture, his spirits failed him. It was all very well to follow a man along an open street or even to hang on to the tail-board of a villain's lorry, but to enter a dark and ominous alley remote from the succour of a kindly world was another matter. Were he to do so, what would prevent his body from being discovered upon the morrow in the river eddies by Wapping Old Stairs?

Rodney was strong for justice. With a father who was Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard he could hardly be otherwise. But was justice excuse enough, he asked himself, to persuade him to accept the fearful hazards that lurked in that alley? The answer was no, and again no.

It is doubtful whether Rodney would have proceeded an inch further in the game but for an act of Fate. The act of Fate was contained in a small body of infants who, being inaccurately informed as to the exact date upon which Guy Fawkes sought to demolish the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder, had decided that the anniversary of this event was on the Fifth of September, rather than of November. Determined that the great British public should be well reminded of this hideous and treasonous business, the infant band had smeared their faces with coal dust and other accessible pigments and were pushing an effigy of Guy Fawkes in an old soap box on wheels. The effigy wore a Negro mask and a hat of extreme dilapidation.

It was the sight of this little band, with its historical tradition, that supplied Rodney not only with courage but with the supreme inspiration of his life. True to his immediate and urgent nature he did not hesitate to act. With the words "Give me that hat and mask, you frightful fools," he tore these required articles from the effigy and planted them upon his own face and head.

The whole business was carried out with such startling suddenness that the owners of these effects could but stand and gasp before the spectacle of Rodney's flying heels. Tears and chagrin were responsible for delaying an immediate pursuit and gave Rodney a chance to dart up the alley without let or hindrance. He had barely proceeded five yards when he became aware of a open doorway and peeping through he beheld a man sitting upon the floor among a quantity of sacks, the figure of a postal clerk. In the gloom beyond were the two malefactors occupied in transferring the contents of a number of mail bags into a huge coal sack which they had brought from the lorry. Rodney stared through the eye slits of the Negro mask, rooted to the spot in horror and amazement. He barely recovered wits enough to back out of the line of sight as the two men turned towards the door. As the first, the villain of Onslow Square emerged, he actually bumped into Rodney whose presence of mind in shouting "Don't forget the guy" was deserving of a more generous reward than a cuff on the ear. The cuff sent Rodney sprawling to his knees and as the second man came out bearing the sack he stumbled over the luckless Rodney and augmented his sufferings with a kick in the slats. But for the fact that the rest of the historical band had now gathered at the opening of the alleyway the two malefactors might well have imagined that Rodney, in the character of Guy Fawkes, was deliberately sleuthing them and, had they done so, it is reasonable to suppose that they might have adopted surer measures

of silencing him. As it was they satisfied themselves by pushing through the excited children and casting their prize into the back of the lorry.

As Rodney struggled to his feet he beheld the lorry flash out of sight across the narrow opening ahead. At the same moment the children fell upon him with cries and blows. If there was one situation in which Rodney could be relied upon to acquit himself with credit it was in a rough house. The emergency did not allow of extreme nicety in the matter of attack, nor of the observance of Queensberry rules. Casting the borrowed hat and mask upon the cobbles, Rodney fought his way out of the mêlée in less than fifteen seconds.

At school he had been accounted something of a runner but no silver Challenge Cup ever lent such wings to his feet as the desire for vengeance which sent him flying up the street in pursuit of the lorry. This as he reached the corner he beheld proceeding eastward along the main thoroughfare. It possessed a lead of not more than two hundred yards by reason of the dense traffic stream that would not allow of swifter progress. The distance was not great but it was great enough for Rodney to realize the futility of trying to overtake it on foot. It was then that he beheld a tradesboy on a bicycle proceeding at a leisurely speed towards him. With the words "In the name of the law" Rodney sprang forward and, colliding with the youth, sent him sprawling in the roadway.

Rodney had picked up the bicycle and had mounted it before the startled youth had recovered either his feet or his vocabulary.

"Hi! What the 'ell are you up to?" was shouted, and with what breath Rodney had left in him, he yelled over his shoulder "Don't be a fool. I'm a policeman."

The chase had now begun in earnest. It is an established fact that a push cycle in skilful hands can accomplish greater speed through City thoroughfares than Malcolm Campbell's Blue Bird. The delivery bicycle with its basket on the handlebars, was not in any sense a speedster, and in that supreme emergency Rodney greatly yearned for that particular bicycle with which, hitherto, his parents had been so reluctant to present him. Nevertheless, energy and determination imparted an unusual celerity to its spinning wheels. The manner in which Rodney navigated the narrow channels between omnibuses and trams excited favourable and unfavourable comments from many beholders. Disinterested persons even went to the length of inquiring whether he wished to break his neck. To these inquiries Rodney vouchsafed no reply. His entire being was now concentrated upon the destruction and apprehension of the malefactors. For, quite apart from the crime they had committed in robbing registered mail bags from a post-office, they had been guilty of the even more heinous offence of causing Rodney grievous bodily harm.

In the thorny paths of school life, Rodney was prepared to accept, with a certain stoic calm the impact of a master's cane upon that portion of his anatomy best suited by Nature for the reception of chastisement. Masters, epitomizing in his mind the final expression of the ruling classes, had certain privileges that could not be denied but that a couple of casual villains should subject him to the indignity of a blow and a kick was more than his proud nature could endure. Even his father, Assistant Commissioner of Scotland Yard, had never laid a hand upon him in wrath nor in correction. He had frequently promised to do so, it is true but the promise had never been fulfilled, nor was Rodney in any great alarm that it would ever be fulfilled. Thus, it was not only in the cause of Justice, but with a burning resentment that he pedalled his bicycle to the peril of his own life and to the jeopardy of the villains' freedom.

Yet, fast as he rode, it is doubtful whether he would have overtaken his quarry but for a policeman who held up the traffic at an intersection. Rodney actually pulled up alongside the lorry at the moment that the policeman dropped his arm to let the traffic through. The roadway ahead branched in two directions, and into the less-crowded prong of the fork the lorry turned, its owners blissfully unaware that they were towing their own damnation from the chain that dangled beneath the tailboard.

THE last period of the journey was perhaps the most perilous so far as Rodney was concerned. The lorry had speeded up considerably and the oscillations of Rodney's front wheel controlled by a single hand, were such as bade fair to separate him from his mount for all time. He was doubting whether he could endure the strain for another hundred yards, when a sharp turn to the left brought the business to an abrupt conclusion. Rodney was not quick enough. The lorry turned but the bicycle went on and Rodney came off. The front wheel of the bicycle struck a lamp-post and, so it had become a half-moon. Rodney had the presence of mind not to let go of the chain and for a few agonized moments he spun like a trout on the end of a line, before sitting down in the roadway with such a bump that his teeth met on his tongue and bit it severely.

Dazed and humiliated, he saw his quarry

turn sharply to the right and vanish from view. There was but little hope left in him when he struggled to his feet and dragged his weary footsteps as far as the corner. And then suddenly his heart leapt with gladness. Not fifty yards ahead the lorry had stopped. The villain of Onslow Square was on the pavement, lifting the circular iron top of a coal shoot from a paving-stone in front of a mean and disreputable-looking house. The ferrety-faced man in the meantime was releasing the pin of the tailboard, and as Rodney watched, with a single eye round the corner of the street, he saw him lift the sack which they had brought from the post office and bearing it to the coal-shoot empty its contents through the trap.

What followed appeared to Rodney to be a remarkable example of the duplicity of the criminal mind. No fewer than seven sacks of coal vanished the same way to mask what lay beneath. The lid was then replaced and the villain of Onslow Square with a wave of the hand, marched up the steps and opened the front door of the house. Rodney overheard the ferrety-face remark –

*Rodney picked up the bicycle and mounted it before the startled youth recovered his feet. "Hi! What are you up to?" exclaimed the tradesboy.*

"Be back in half an hour." He then climbed into the driver's seat and drove away.

For five breathless minutes Rodney

waited at the corner before daring to walk down the street. It was easy to locate the house from the coal dust on the pavement. No. 16, Princess Mary Street, S.C.4. Rodney Grannom knew exactly what to do when he entered a telephone booth a little distance away. For once in his life he was not baffled by the intricacies of Sutton A. Whitehall one-two-one-two was the number he asked for, and when a voice replied "Scotland Yard," he exclaimed, excitedly

"This is Rodney Grannom. I want to speak to my father Colonel Grannom,

and [illegible] frightfully important.

Colonel Grannom was [illegible] the Commissioner when the buzzer went.

"Who is that?" he demanded.

"Dad, it's me—Rodney. The most frightfully exciting thing has happened."

A cloud came over the brow of the Assistant Commissioner.

"Now just listen to me," he began, but for once in his life Rodney was determined that his father should do the listening.

"No, but, dad, listen. You must, you don't know. I've found some thieves—post-office thieves."

"Will you kindly stop talking nonsense," said Colonel Grannom.

"But it's true. They're frightful, appalling men, and I captured them. I followed them all over London. I had to steal a bicycle——"

But he got no farther.

"If you imagine," said Colonel Grannom, "that you can ring up Scotland Yard and talk nonsense of that kind to me, you'll jolly well find out you're wrong. Get off the line

at once. I'll talk to you when I come home to-night."

He banged the receiver on the rest with an angry gesture.

"Who was it?" asked the Commissioner.

Colonel Grannom shrugged his shoulders. "That youngest son of mine. No discipline. Wants a lesson. Impudent young rascal. I'm sorry, sir. Well, you were saying."

In the telephone booth in E.C.4, Rodney Grannom was leaning against the glass door with utter despair gnawing at his vitals. And that was what came of good citizenship. That was what came of risking life and limb in the cause of Justice. That was what came of crying "Wolf!" about fifteen times a day. You weren't believed.

Well, there was still another twopence in his pocket, and just one more chance of saving the world from utter ruin at the expense of a six-mile walk home. Once again the pennies clattered into the slot.

"Police," said Rodney.

It was the Charge Sergeant of the local police-station who answered the call.

"If I want to catch who?" he demanded, and slowly a look of interest came into his eyes, for not five minutes before the news of a mailbag robbery at Water Row Post Office had been reported.

"The coal cellar at 16, Princess Mary Street," he repeated. "And what were the two chaps like?"

Rodney described them with a wealth of inaccurate and accurate detail.

"But you must hurry. They are going to meet there in half an hour."

"Who are you, anyway?" said the sergeant.

At that question Rodney's courage failed him. Who could say but that these men were members of a gang—a gang who would ruthlessly track down and destroy the person responsible for their comrades' apprehension? Life was too dear to be thrown away for a little publicity.

"A friend of Justice," Rodney replied. "A foe to malefactors." Then he hung up.

"Sounds unlikely," said the sergeant, "but it might be worth looking into."

RODNEY was at the corner of the street playing with a peg-top, when the police van, a most unofficial-looking affair, drew up outside 16, Princess Mary Street, and he was one of an enormous crowd that watched the two men brought forth in manacles, and the successful recovery of the contents of half-a-dozen registered letter mail bags. Then Rodney went home.

His method of travel was a little irregular for a friend of Justice. He adopted the principle of boarding omnibuses and asking for a ticket to some place in the opposite direction to the one in which they were travelling. Thus only a portion of the journey was carried out on foot and the rest at the expense of the omnibus company. But, after all, what did it matter? The nation owed him something. To be precise, it owed him eight thousands pounds, although that was a fact upon which he was not informed until later.

At the top of the road in which the Grannoms lived, he broke into a run, and ran so fast that he was quite out of breath when he burst into the room in which Kenneth and Colin were enjoying a yellow and pink ice brick.

"I say, you two," he gasped.

Kenneth looked at Colin and shook his head. Colin said,

"Here it comes!"

Then Rodney cried aloud:—

"You shut up. I've had the most tremendous adventure that neither of you have ever had."

"Darleeng!" said Kenneth. "Didn't I say you would? Didn't we know it? All sorts of wonderful things have happened, haven't they?"

"Yes, they jolly well have," declared Rodney, desperately. "I only arrested a couple of post-office thieves, that's all. If you call that nothing."

Once more Kenneth laid the forefinger of his right hand upon his temple.

"Well, really," he protested, "seeing that you've been out for about six hours, I do think you might have thought up a better one than that."

With tears of rage Rodney banged across to the door.

"All right," he cried. "Then I won't tell you one single thing. And it's not a bit of good asking."

"It isn't very likely that we should ask," said Colin, philosophically.

Mrs. Grannom had invited some friends for Bridge. Somehow Rodney was never very popular at card parties. His sudden invasion of the drawing-room was only a mild success.

"I say, mums, the most terrific thing," he began. "I've been following, and——"

Mrs. Grannom held up a finger.

"Yes, darling," she said. "I know. But not just now. You shall tell me all about it later."

"But mum——"

"Later, darling." The voice had become a little stricter in tone, then it softened. "But I'm glad you've been enjoying yourself. Run along."

Purple and thwarted, Rodney backed out into the hall in time to hear his father's key turn in the lock.

The face that the Colonel directed upon

his youngest son was singularly granitic. He beckoned with a forefinger and led Rodney into the dining-room.

"Come you here," he said.

"But, dad—"

"And listen to what I say," the voice purred inexorably. "It's high time, Rodney, that you learned to toe the mark. If you think that I can be rung up at the Yard to listen to a lot of loose talk about foolish games that you've been playing, it's time that you learnt otherwise. I've not the slightest intention of being made a fool of in front of the Commissioner by any son of mine. You may not be aware, but we were in the middle of a most important conference on the subject of post-office robberies, and to have to break off and listen to a lot of frivolous bosh from you is past endurance."

"But, dad, it was true," wailed Rodney.

"That settles it," said Colonel Grannom emphatically. "I had intended to let you off and leave it at that, but if there is one thing I will not put up with, it is a lot of rotten excuses. No, not another word. Go to your room and go to bed, and I'll see you again at breakfast to-morrow morning."

It was a very pathetic figure that climbed the stairs bedwards in silence.

COLONEL GRANNOM was driven to light a cigarette to prevent himself from recalling it. But, after all, he reflected, there must be some discipline in life, however painful it may be to the parental authority to enforce it.

Mrs. Grannom, who happened to be dummy, came into the hall to greet her husband.

"I heard you talking to Rodney," she said. "What was it about?"

The impudent young rascal had the cheek to ring me up at Scotland Yard. Some infernal nonsense about this following game."

"Have you sent him to bed?"

Colonel Grannom nodded. "I wouldn't have done, but if he will persist in these falsehoods—"

"Poor little chap," said Mrs. Grannom. "I suppose you were right. You know I don't think he means to lie, it's just that his imagination gets the better of him."

"Then it is up to us," said Colonel Grannom, "to get the better of his imagination. Why, damn it, Maude, it's a duty."

"Duties are always painful, aren't they?" she said, and sighed.

Her husband looked at her with a twisted smile.

"I never cared much for them myself when I was young," he admitted.

A shaft of pleasant spring sunlight pierced Colonel Grannom's room when the maid drew back the curtains and placed his early-morning tea and papers by the bedside.

Colonel Grannom sipped the tea in a reflective mood, almost, one might say, a retrospective mood. For the sunlight looked so young and brought youth and the memory of youth into the room.

"Poor little blighter," he thought. "Still, a little discipline does all of us good. I used to romance a bit when I was a kid. Well, well! I'll jolly him up a bit at breakfast."

His hand stretched out for a newspaper. Sprawled across the front page were the streamer headlines, CHILD'S VOICE RESULTS IN CAPTURE OF POST OFFICE ROBBERS. Then, in smaller type, Registered Mail Recovered to the Value of Over Eight Thousand Pounds.

Colonel Grannom sat up in bed, and fixed a monocle in his eye. The reading matter that followed was of a sensational kind. It was the last line of a paragraph in which it was stated that the child had refused to disclose his identity and had adopted the alias of "Foe to Malefactors," which finally convinced Colonel Grannom that his son was at the bottom of the business.

Ten minutes later Mrs. Grannom was surprised to see her husband standing fully dressed at the end of her bed.

"You're very early, aren't you?" she asked.

He seemed embarrassed about something, and crossing to the window played awhile with the acorn of the blind pull.

"Yes—am a bit. Such a lovely day. Spring and all that. Thought I'd walk across the park—have a look at the crocuses."

"But without your breakfast?"

"Well, I might get a cup of coffee at the stall at Hyde Park Corner."

"Have you seen Rodney?"

"No, I haven't," he admitted. "Thought I'd get you to talk to him for me. Tell him everything's all right, and he's a good kid. Darn good. By the by, wasn't he asking about a bicycle?"

Mrs. Grannom nodded.

"Well, buy him one," said Colonel Grannom. "You know, a good 'un. Let him choose it himself. Take him along with you this morning and do it."

Mrs. Grannom screwed up her mouth, and looked at him critically.

"Why, whatever's happened to make you change about Rodney?"

"Change? Oh, nothing in particular. Care to look at the paper?"

He tossed it to the foot of the bed, and a moment later she heard the front door slam.

"Queer," she thought. "Hard men are terribly sentimental."

She opened the paper and stared, and then she added aloud, "And awful cowards!"

# STRANGE GUEST

It is a pity, in a way, that Lydia Pollen comes into this story, she spoils it, rather. If it hadn't been for Lydia the ending might have been different—although whether that would have been for good or ill nobody knows. Charles was satisfied. But her evidence is valuable, for it is such a very peculiar story that, without Lydia to vouch for its veracity, one would hesitate to accept it. Even Charles, to whom it happened, might in time have come to believe that he had dreamt the whole thing, if it had not been for Lydia. You can't count Gammon, because he's an actor.

Mr. Gerald Gammon was winding his watch; he noticed that the hour was three-fifty, and recalled without enthusiasm that he was due at rehearsal at ten thirty, this allowing him a maximum of six hours repose before he presented himself at the stage door of the Pompadour.

Mr. Gammon occupied the smaller and relatively less expensive apartment two floors above that of Charles Pollen, overlooking the Green Park. Mr. Pollen could afford to overlook the Green Park. Mr. Gammon could not; that was the difference between them. But, since the disparity in their passbooks was balanced by the similarity of their tastes, Mr. Gammon boldly resolved to waive the former. An address in Piccadilly impressed managers, and it was a fact that he had never been out of an engagement since taking up his fresh quarters.

He had just said good night to his friend Charles Pollen, with whom he had spent an agreeable evening out and about, in the customary fashion of young men about town, and was leisurely proceeding to undress, when the bell rang.

Mr. Gammon's heart excusably dropped a beat. [illegible] at such an hour, and if a stranger arrived it was customary for the night porter to ring through for instructions, before sending him up.

The bell continued to send its [illegible] vibration through Mr. Gammon's silence; someone evidently had a finger on the button and did not mean to take it off until the door was opened. Unbraced and reluctant, he obeyed the summons.

If the appearance of Charles Pollen, to whom he had just bade a peaceful good-night on the first floor took him aback he was even more disconcerted by the words that proceeded from Charles's lips.

"Gerald. There's a girl in my bed!"

"Eh?" gaped Gammon. Charles floundered past him into the hall and closed the door.

"There's a *girl* in my *bed*!"

"Lucky devil!" said Gerald, full-throatedly, he had just remembered he was a West-end actor, that the situation was one which might have been lifted bodily from any one of a dozen bedroom-and-*lingerie* *soupçons* to which he had contributed his quota of the requisite lightness. He smote Charles on the shoulder with a trained *bonhomie*. "The gods are fond of you, Charles."

"Don't be an ass, what am I to do about it?"

"I should ask *her*, if I were you," suggested Gerald, now well in the skin of his part.

"But she's asleep. At least, I think she is. At least—if she's not dead!"

Gerald frowned, he had not the touch for melodrama.

"Does she *look* dead?"

"She's got her arm crooked like this, round the pillow, she's lying on her side, with her back towards the door. I couldn't see her face," confessed Charles.

"What sort of a back?" demanded Gerald, sternly.

"How do you mean—what sort of a back?"

"Well, was it an attractive back?" pursued the inexorable Gerald.

"Oh lord, you'd better come and look for yourself," said Charles, sulkily.

Gerald frowned, tossing his cuff-links in the air and catching them with a tiny chink that sent ice trickling down Charles's spine.

"Do stop making that devilish row."

"I'll have to get dressed again."

Well, get a move on, I've just remembered I've left the door open, we don't want the night porter nosing round.

As he complied with his friend's request Mr Gammon reflected that it was a jolly good thing Lydia was away Lydia Pullen was a nice girl but she was one of the people who always want a thing until they've got it. All the women said Charles was wasted on her Women say that kind of thing She and Charles were rather fond of each other and Charles was very nice to Lydia and understood her psychology That was the reason why when Lydia periodically wanted a divorce Charles never gave it to her, because somehow he had an idea that if Lydia had her divorce she would not be nearly so happy as she was being miserable because she had not got it

As Gerald was aware a spot of bother, a revival of the divorce fixation, had wafted Lydia temporarily on a visit to an aunt in Westmorland. Outwardly serene, Charles was inwardly troubled He wanted things to be all right again between him and Lydia. As though Gerald's thoughts had communicated themselves to his mind, Charles said, dourly

"It won't be much good Lydia's being away if we're served with notice to quit"

Why don't you ring through to the night porter and find out if he knows anything about it?"

I daren't, you ass! You know as well as I do that he's got one of those single-track minds that don't allow for contingencies like these."

H'm. Profitt's a more human sort of blighter, what time does he come on duty?

"Profitt's pretty scared at present," was Charles's gloomy response "He was telling

# MARGUERITE STEEN

me he a had orders to keep an eye skinned on that end flat on the second floor They ve threatened to sack him if they hear reports of any queer doings.'

Jolly hard lines on Profitt, he s not cut out for a policeman. I'll black his eye if I catch him snooping round after me Good lord, we are a couple of asses Where does Bland come in on this ?

That s just it—it s Bland's night out

'At this hour of the morning ?'

He s got a girl down at Brighton, I rang him up this morning from Tubby Rendle s to say he could have the Morris "

You are a softhearted chump, Charles ! You let anyone make a mug of you "

' I don t see where you get that "

' You're damned good to your servant and see how he treats you in return. The girl couldn't have got into your flat unless Bland let her in. And if he just buzzed off to Brighton leaving a stranger in the place, with all that stuff of yours lying about, and the Romney—well, I don't think much of him, that s all

' Unless she broke in after he'd gone.'

What ? With that sleuth-hound in the hall ? Think again "

You're quite dressed enough now," put in Charles, fretfully. " Dash it, you're not going to a dance

I'm not so sure you re not leading me one," retorted Gerald, suspiciously " Look here, if this is one of your dam' fool jokes I'll break your neck when we get down stairs. Hang it, I've got a rehearsal to-morrow—to-day, I mean——"

' I wish to heaven it was a joke," said the miserable Charles, propelling Gammon towards the lift They were immediately shot down to the first floor, arriving opposite Charles Pollen's door at the precise moment when a figure appeared round the bend of the stairs that led to the ground level. Gerald nudged Charles violently in the ribs, sauntering out of the lift in his best nonchalant manner

The figure resolved itself into that of the night porter a lugubrious individual upon whom his guardianship of the night-time peace of the Chambers appeared to lie heavily His greeting was respectful but there was that in the joyless droop of his eyelid that informed Mr. Pollen and Mr Gammon that he had no sort of opinion of gentlemen who followed the godless practice of rarely being in their beds before night was drifting into dawn

Anything wrong ? ' inquired Gerald, blandly

No. sir At least, I ope not, sir —— His eye fell on the open door which the two, obviously, had not reached before his arrival, and swivelled suspiciously on Charles.

" I hope not—ha ha ' Not much likely to happen to us while you're on duty, is there, my man ? " Getting his teeth Charles remembered that Gerald's downfall was, invariably, overacting, off the stage the things he did extremely well on.

It won t be my fault if things go wrong ere,' pursued the mainstay of the Chambers, now openly mistrustful

' Indeed, no . No, no, indeed " Judging it well to end the conversation, Charles was moving towards his door with a terse ' Good night," when the porter stopped him.

' Excuse me, sir—but isn't your door open ?

Yes, it is , what about it ? " said Charles, haughtily

TOO pleased with himself now, to let well alone, Gerald added -

" Not much escapes your notice, does it—ha—Jevons ? "

' My name's Burke." growled the suspicious one. " No. There's not much goes on in these Chambers, gentlemen, without I know something about it. That's what I'm paid for."

" A distasteful job for a sympathetic nature," murmured Gerald.

" I see. Good-night, ' said Charles, coldly.

" 'Ow about that door, sir ? "

" Oh, *that* ! " Gerald laughed heartily, as though he had bet that moment perceived the object of Mr Burke's attention

' I happen to have been into my flat already," said Charles with a murderous look at Gerald. " I have just been up to Mr Gammon s—to—borrow something ——"

" Well, I'll be obliged if you gentlemen will close your doors when you go visiting It ain't fair to me if proper precautions ain't taken. And excuse me, sir what about the lady ? "

' The lady ? "

" Well, sir you know what the regulations is here. I suppose the information she give was correct ? "

" What the devil do you mean ? " blustered Charles, losing his head slightly Who authorized you to question my visitors ? "

' Rules s rules," said the incorruptible, sourly Forestalling the dangerous intention in Charles's eye, Gerald hastily resumed the initiative

' You may accept my reassurance, Burke, that all is *comme il faut*. Mr Pollen you know as a gentleman of unblemished reputation, If any inquiries follow, they will be dealt with—either by him or by Mrs. Pollen. Come. Charles. we must not

keep Stella waiting any longer." With which masterstroke, he contrived to sweep Charles out of the danger zone. "Pretty knowing of me, what, to fetch Lydia into it?" he whispered, as the safety-latch clicked into position.

"You ass, you made him a dam' sight more suspicious than he was to start with! Dash it, Gerald, he *knows!*"

Yes. I should say definitely yes.

How the devil do you think she got past him?

Now listen to me, Charles," said Gerald, hooking a finger into his friend's buttonhole and drawing him aside into one of the darkened rooms. "There's just one thing you'd better explain before we go any further. Why the devil didn't you, while you had the chance, give the game up and get him to put her out of the flat?"

Oh, well——"

"It'll take a devil of a lot of explaining—to Lydia," pursued Gerald, remorselessly.

"It looks as if she'll get what she wants this time," muttered Charles, bitterly.

Well—why?"

"She had pretty hair," mumbled Charles—"and she lay all curled up—as if she was very tired—she was sleeping so soundly—dash it, if it had been a dog I couldn't——

A-a-ah!

"What are you ah-ing about?" snarled Charles.

Nothing—except that that chumpish soft-heartedness of yours will land you in Queer Street one day. Dash it, there isn't a man or woman in London who doesn't know they can plant anything on you and you'll stand for it."

"Kindly mind your own business," retorted Charles, stiffly.

"There's something else. Hang it, Charles, where's your switch?" The room sprang into soft, dubious illumination—Lydia's drawing-room, all black and mother-of-pearl: a projection of Lydia's elegant black-and-white self. Gerald showed up a trifle pale, Charles extremely red. "Look here, Charles, you said something about her being dead."

"Well, she may be, for all I know."

Well, dash it, Charles, friendship's friendship, and all that rot, but I don't particularly want to be mixed up in a scandal with the new play coming on next week: it wouldn't do me any good with my public, and I wouldn't put it past old Sabelstein to use it as an excuse to end my contract: he hates paying my money."

Oh, all right, then get out."

I wish you wouldn't be so peevish, Charles," said Gerald, plaintively.

Damn it, wouldn't you be peevish if you were married to Lydia and a perfectly unknown girl had planted herself—not only in your flat, but in your bed?"

Take my advice, old man," said Gerald, in a fatherly voice. "Ring up Scotland Yard."

"I'm damned if I will. We've got to find out something about the girl before we set the police on her."

Well, dash it, it's a criminal act to force your way into a stranger's flat; it must be a jolly sight worse when it's into a stranger's *bed!*"

I don't see she's done any damage——

Charles," said Gerald, in a peculiar voice. "Look at that cabinet."

Charles looked; he went on looking. His mouth gradually dropped open, and he put out a hand to support himself by the doorpost. Gerald said nothing; he was familiar with the Pollens' drawing-room. He vanished round a painted screen; Charles knew exactly where he was standing: in front of a little secretaire of Lydia's, above which hung a picture that represented quite an important part of the young Pollens' fortune.

"I thought as much; it's gone."

THE Romney was gone; and the contents of a cabinet which housed Charles's miniature collection were gone. Slowly they walked round the room, indentifying the loss of other valuable objects: a diamond snuff-box, sometime the property of Mazarin; a set of solid gold picture frames; a fan signed by Conder—none of them things that would cause a millionaire to lose heart, but the Pollens, although comfortably established, were not millionaires.

Now what about Scotland Yard?"

But, dammit, Gerald! These things *can't* have anything to do with the girl who's sleeping in my bed. Whoever heard of a thief pinching a Romney and then settling down calmly to sleep in the bed of the man she's just burgled?"

Mark my words, boy," said Gerald, sinking into a detective *rôle* which he had filled during his brief unmentionable past in the provinces, "that young lady could tell us a lot if she were waked. That is, if she's living to explain it. My theory is she's the Accomplice who Knew Too Much; and if you walk round the far side of the bed you'll probably find a stream of gore dripping slowly on the carpet——

"Oh, hell, I can't have that," said Charles. "Lydia would be furious.

Come on, Charles; and before we enter the fatal chamber I should like to emphasize the fact that it's damned good of me to mix myself up in your sticky affairs."

I've got it!" said Charles, without

troubling to make suitable acknowledgment.

'She's got into the wrong flat.'

'Good enough for the Aldwych,' conceded Gerald. "But we're facing cold chunky realities, old son."

"It isn't a dream, is it?" inquired Charles, plaintively, as they tiptoed along the hall.

'We'll probably jolly well wish it was, before we're much older,' was Gerald's unreassuring rejoinder.

"We'll go in by my dressing-room the door doesn't squeak."

'Is that important? If she's dead a squeak's neither here nor there, and if she's alive it'll prepare her for our arrival.'

'Look here,' said Charles, standing suddenly still. 'I'm prepared to bet my last fiver that girl isn't dead. She must be dog-tired, or she'd have wakened up when I fell over my boots coming out of the room. I think—but I'm not sure—her shoulders gave a sort of little heave as if she sighed in her sleep, but she didn't move. Dash it all, for a girl to sleep like that isn't normal. She must be whacked to the wide—all shot away—crazy for sleep, and I'm damned if I'll have her wakened up till she's had her sleep out.'

'Snooping here, are you?" remarked Gerald, with an ironic inflexion as he followed Charles into his dressing-room. Turning with a scowl to silence him, Charles's mouth fell open as it had done in the drawing-room.

'Good lord! The bed wasn't made up this morning.'

'Get on, Charles. I'm getting curious."

The final drop was contributed to the tension by Charles's discovery that the door was bolted.

'Nice girl,' said Gerald, in a detached manner.

'But you ass, the bolt is shot on *this* side!" It took some easing, for never since the Poilens occupied the flat, had Charles bolted his dressing-room door. He left that to Lydia, in her moods of headache or temperament.

AT last the door swung cautiously open into the silence of an unlighted room. Gerald wheezed, it was a bad habit of his when he was emotionally disturbed. Charles pinched his biceps muscle savagely; there was a faint click and a single small lamp illuminated the scene with a glow of soft orange.

The Poilens, when on good terms, shared one of those low square beds that modern luxury has invented; it was a pretty bed, designed specially for Lydia; it was a becoming bed certainly, to its present occupant. As Gerald stared, Charles again seized his arm in an agitated grip, mouthing the pregnant sentence —

*She's turned over!*"

It was Gerald who first recovered his self possession—in time to leap noiselessly back into the dressing-room as the sleeping beauty apparently becoming conscious of the light snuggled her nose more deeply into Lydia's pillows, much as a disturbed kitten snuggles into its mother's fur.

'Well?"

'Well, good heavens, Charles—she's a *lady*." Gerald's voice was hoarse with awe as he closed and rebolted the dressing-room door. 'I say, Charles—did you notice?'

'She is pretty, isn't she?" whispered Charles, on a note of fatuity.

'Pretty be damned! She gets her *lingerie* from the place my sister does. The things were right under my nose! And you don't catch me making any mistake over Chanel perfume—and I say, Charles. What are Lydia's brushes and combs and things?'

'Shagreen—but she's got them with her."

"Yes, I thought so—but this girl's stuff is all over the dressing-table—blonde tortoiseshell with some sort of crest or monogram.'

'You've been using your eyes," said Charles, dryly. 'What about ringing up Scotland Yard?'

'I'm blowed if you will!'

'I'm blessed if I do!" answered Charles with a grin.

'Have you tried Bland's door?' Gerald dashed out of the dressing-room. A moment later a shout came from the end of the passage, and Charles surged furiously in pursuit.

'Don't yell like that, you ass! You'll scare her into fits!'

'But—but Bland's door is locked!" stammered Gerald.

'*What?*' Three bounds brought Charles to investigate; as the pair of them wrestled with the handle it became apparent that someone else was wrestling within. 'Look out!" muttered Charles, and ducked suddenly, dragging Gerald with him. From this prudent but undignified position they found themselves staring up at the figure of Bland—in his pyjamas.

'What the devil——?" began Charles.

'I'm so sorry, sir. I didn't hear you come in, my window opening at the back, right over the garage, it's hard to hear what goes on in the flat—specially in the small hours when the gentlemen starts to come back from their parties," he explained apologetically.

Charles rose with as much dignity as he could summon, and said, testily —

'Will you kindly explain what's been going on here to-night——" He broke off

staring beyond Bland into the room behind him. Ordinarily an austere little cell, it presented an appearance of inexplicable luxury. In fact, wanton was the word Gerald, looking over Charles's shoulder, mentally applied to it. A kind of cellar of the Forty Thieves or a cross between a second-hand furniture store, a silversmith's, and a high-class modiste's establishment. Charles gave an involuntary gulp of relief as he beheld the Romney, propped against the back of Bland's bedside chair, he goggled a little at the sight of Bland's pillow, dented by the dark and slightly gruesome shape of a revolver.

Well, sir, in the absence of direct instructions from you, I thought it best to take precautions. I 'ave the snuffbox sir, and two or three other oddments, in my trousis pocket,' added Bland.

"I *am* dreaming," said Charles. "I *know* I am. This is where someone arrives with the shaving water."

"Would you mind starting at the beginning, Bland?" asked Gerald politely. Bland closed the door behind him, locked it, slipped the key in his breast pocket, and followed his employer into the dining-room.

You see, sir, I didn't really know where I was, when the young lady arrived, in a state of distress, as you might say—telling me she'd had her handbag stolen with the

*Charles stared beyond Bland into the room behind him. Ordinarily an austere little cell, it presented an appearance of inexplicable luxury, a kind of cellar of the Forty Thieves.*

letter of instructions from you saying she was to be put up for the night 'ere——

*It was!*

Well, you see, sir, it was pretty awkward for me. Seeing she was blatantly a lady——'

'Patently Bland, patently,' murmured Gerald.

'Hang it, Bland, am I in the habit of putting up blatant ladies in my flat overnight?'

'Well, sir, if you'll excuse me saying so, one never knows what you'll be up to. You've got a name, sir, for being that kind-hearted—I wouldn't exactly put it past you, meeting a young female—lady—in distress——'

'In fact, all the world knows you for a sucker, Charles, and this is where it leads you,' said Gerald unkindly.

'And 'er telling me you and she'd known each other since you was kids in prams——'

'Charles, you'd better go in and have another look; you may detect some familiar traits. I suppose you did know some girls when you were a kid in a pram?'

'She really seemed on the point of conking out, sir, when she arrived, with that 'eavy dressing-case. A nice thing it would be, I thought, if she did conk out there an' then—me being a bachelor and unused to coping with females. So I took the liberty of offering 'er a whisky and soda, sir—partly out of compassion, and partly because I thought it 'ud be a bit of a test. You can just about size a woman up, sir, by the way she deals with a whisky and soda.

'Well, how did she deal?'

"Took one sip, sir, and then she put it down and said I was very kind, but she really didn't like it, and would it be too much to ask if she might 'ave a cup of tea. I took the precaution to fix the safety-latch the way she'd not be able to get out without a bit of trouble, and I made 'er the tea. While she was drinking it she told me all about running into you at Lord Rendle's, and how you gave 'er this note to me that she'd had stolen with her handbag.'

'Confidence trick," boomed Gerald. 'I'm surprised at you, Bland.'

'Well, sir, 'ow was I to know who Mr Pollen had met at his lordship's?'

'It was a stag party,' growled Charles. 'There wasn't a woman in the house, except the servants."

'Well, sir, it put me in a very queer position, I can tell you. You see, she was quite open in a way; she told me straight out she'd 'ad to lie to the night porter, telling 'im she was your cousin, before he'd let her come up. She seemed properly put out about that.'

'I shouldn't wonder,' said Charles, ironically. 'What time did all this happen?'

'Shortly after nine o'clock, sir. I'd got my things on ready to nip down to Brighton, having waited to see if you were coming in to dinner——"

"Sorry, Bland. I ought to have rung you up," said Charles, contritely. "It never struck me that you'd be expecting me, as I only left Lord Rendle's at seven o'clock.'

'That's quite right, sir, I didn't want to get down there too early, as my young lady's on duty at 'er place till ten this week. Well, sir, I didn't like to question 'er too closely, 'er being beyond all manner of doubt a lady, and it was on the tip of my tongue to tell her I was expecting you in any minute. In the end I didn't, because I thought if she happened not to be all she seemed, it wouldn't be a bad idea if you were to come in and catch her stiff. I switched the telephone through to Mrs Pollen's room and called round a bit, but you'd just left the club when I rang them, and nobody seemed to know where you were. I felt in a proper quandary. I didn't want to fail in my duty, and at the same time I didn't want to be 'ad for a mug.'

"Naturally," said Gerald, casting a withering look at Charles, whom he now half suspected of complicity in the matter; some of Charles's practical jokes were historic. It did, however, strike him that this one went rather far even for Charles.

'Had she some luggage, did you say?'

'Well, that clinched it, in a manner of speaking, sir. I don't know if I ever 'appened to mention to you I was once in the packing department at Asprey's. I'd know an Asprey dressing-case if I met it in the Sahara Desert, sir.'

'That's psychologically sound," mused Gerald.

'The only snag so far as I could see was she seemed to think you were still in the country, sir. I'll grant you that was suspicious. But I must admit there was something about the young lady that made me feel there must be an explanation somewhere.'

'Go on, Bland. Why don't you say she vamped you?'

'She didn't, if you'll excuse me saying so, Mr Gammon. She sort of threw 'erself on my mercy like a lorst child. I could see at a glance it wasn't no use nagging 'er—'er eyes was closing with sleep as she sat in the drawing-room talking to me. Well, there you are, sir, and there was I—

opping about like you might say a boiled egg in a saucepan listening for your latch-key, then it suddenly struck me if you'd really fixed this up with the young lady you might be sleeping out—'aving an ideer it wouldn't be convennable for you and 'er to share the flat with Mrs Pollen away And just when I was at my wits' end wishing to 'eavens you'd ring up, and ardening my 'eart to turn 'er out into the night, she comes to the door of the kitchen and says to me, 'I'm dead sleepy, I think I'll go to bed now if you'll fix things up for me' Well, there didn't seem anything for me to do under the circumstances but re-make the bed'

"Man of action Bland," remarked the irrepressible Mr Gammon

But still feeling uneasy about the ole thing, I took the liberty of removing the contents of Mrs Pollen's wardrobe into my own room, then I tried 'er chest of drawers, and found she'd left everything locked up There didn't seem to be much about for the young lady to scrap with, if she felt that way inclined, so I showed 'er the room, and she wished me a polite good night said she'd explain everything in the morning, and closed the door after 'er Then, sir, not knowing what to think, I went round the place, as you saw collecting the valuables took them into my room and giving up 'ope, somewhere about two o'clock, of seeing you to-night, I went to bed, with my door locked and my gun handy, in case there was any funny business in the night

You made my bed up in the dressing-room'

I thought I'd better do that, sir, in case you was to turn up after all"

Well there you are," said Charles, turning to Gerald What do you know about that? I mean, where are we now?

Where are you you mean," corrected Gerald, coldly " It's as plain as a pike-staff, somebody's wished this business on you, to teach you not to be such a soft chump And a darned good thing Lydia wasn't at home, at any rate'

Excuse me, sir, have you looked at your letters? There's one from Mrs Pollen I thought it might say something about when she's coming ome. There's Lady Milfort's dance to-morrow night I know she was particularly anxious not to miss that"

Good lord," muttered Charles, picking up the letters from the tray " Suppose she'd turned up on the eleven something train from the North

As he was in the act of tearing open the envelope a tiny but familiar sound reached the ears of all three, drawing their eyes with horror to the outer door of the flat It was the unmistakable sound of the insertion of a latchkey

BLAND, with a single look presaging doom vanished into the kitchen Charles and Gerald stood shoulder to shoulder like stags at bay and the door opened—to admit Mrs. Charles Pollen Behind her the detested face of the night porter leered triumph With a strong effort, Gerald rallied himself for the greeting which Charles seemed incapable of bestowing

'Well well, *Lydia!* This is frightfully jolly—isn't it, Charles?"

"Please put my bags down there, said Mrs. Charles Pollen, frostily 'Thank you very much. Please tip him, Charles. Good night"

*Good* night madam," leered the night porter, unctuously the dirty look he bestowed upon Charles might have originated on a canvas by Doré The door of the flat closed

Charles, you are an absolute beast!"

Oh, come, come, surely that's putting it too strongly?" intervened Gerald, taking pity upon his friend, for he could not to save his life imagine how Charles could extricate himself from the situation

Do you mind minding your own business Gerald? Whatever I may happen to ask you it's always the same,' pursued Lydia in a high, small-hours kind of a voice. You don't seem to think it's worth your while to do the *least* little thing to please me. If you haven't the generosity to give me a divorce you might at least have the common decency to send the car to meet me."

'*Angel!*' babbled Charles, with a frenzied eye upon the door of the bedroom 'I didn't even know you were coming

'I suppose you don't even trouble to open my letters?" said Lydia, bitterly

"Darling, honestly, I've been down at Tubby Rendle's for the week-end I've only been in a few minutes——

And when I get here, worn out, you and Gerald are romping about all over the flat——"

Not romping Lydia, be broadminded!"

I'm speaking to my husband After spending the whole night in a beastly train without any sleeping coaches, one does look forward to a little peace and quiet when one gets home." She stamped a lovely foot Please get out of my way, Charles, you can sleep in the dressing-room to-night"

Charles flung his arms desperately about her small reluctant figure Gerald reflected that although Lydia was lovely perhaps lovelier than ever at this present moment when fat glue had whitened her small pointed face to the colour of the gardenias in the

lapel of her dark fur coat, he would not be her husband for a pension.

Angel, whatever made you come on such a beast of a day?

I suppose you've forgotten the Somervills are lunching with us tomorrow? That's so like you, Charles. You know we've got to keep in with the Somervills if there's to be the smallest chance of her asking us to go that cruise with them in April.

Oh, lord," groaned Charles.

"Please let me go to my room."

"Darling, you can't. Darling——" Charles screwed up his eyes, taking care, however, to keep firm hold of Lydia, who was now wriggling like a little eel in her husband's embrace. "Wait a minute. I've got some news to tell you. Darling, some very, very bad news."

Lydia went limp under her furs. She blinked at Charles. Gerald instinctively assumed the attitude of the chief mourner at the funeral, so far as he could see Charles's number was up.

Go on," said Lydia, in an extinguished voice. I suppose they won't give us seats for Noel Coward's first night."

"I've got those—it's worse than that. Darling, please prepare yourself for a great shock. There's a girl in my—your—our bed."

"What girl?" inquired Lydia, withdrawing herself briskly from her husband's arms.

"I'd—don't know," stuttered Charles.

"Has he been drinking?" she asked Gerald, who shook his head mournfully.

Unfortunately—no.

"Precious," said Lydia, very kindly—the kindness was for Charles, the look she threw across her shoulder at Gerald would have petrified an oyster. "Don't be silly. It's all right. Come with me—we'll go and look at the bed together, and you'll find——"

"For goodness sake, no! It's the absolute truth, Lydia. There's a *girl* in our *bed*—and Bland put her there!"

How dare he!" flamed Lydia.

It wasn't quite his fault—she's a pretty girl," stammered the luckless Charles, and earned the twin brother to the look beneath which Gerald was still congealed.

*The Unknown Lady carried a dressing-case, of which Gerald, at a bound, relieved her*
*"Is it five o'clock yet?" she asked.*

Abruptly thrusting Charles on one side, Lydia darted towards the door of the bedroom, and was about to fling it open when she was saved the trouble.

Now here it is only fair to warn the reader that there is no climax to this story. At least, the only climax, if you can call it one, is a sort of negative affair concerned with the appearance of the Unknown Lady at the bedroom door. That, after all, is the way things happen, life very rarely rounds off a situation neatly, and this, as you will see, was no exception to the rule.

Both Charles and Gerald suppressed a slight yelp when the door was seen to be opening; the same dread was in both their minds—that the erstwhile sleeping beauty would appear in some indescribable diaphanety of clothing, agreeable to the unregenerate masculine eye, but unlikely to commend itself to Lydia.

Each, therefore, drew a breath of relief when she was seen to be clothed with a circumspectness which would have drawn, not merely the approval, but the admiration, of the most censorious of audiences. It was even a little unfortunate, thought Gerald, seeing Lydia's features tighten in the way a woman's tighten when she comes face to face with one more elegantly dressed than herself, that the Unknown Lady's attire expressed that suavity of perfection which sets feminine teeth on edge, and sends husbands home with the tactless inquiry:

'Why can't you get a nice little simple thing like Mrs. ——?' Somehow Gerald felt it might have been better for Charles if the Unknown Lady had been a little dowdy if her chin had not been tilted on so unquestionable a collar of mink. Lydia's favourite fur.

THE eyes of this strange, calm lady were very large—and extremely blue. she wore them wide open, as though anxious they should gather all that there was of light. She carried an Asprey dressing-case, of which Gerald, at a bound, relieved her. He heard Lydia make a sound behind him. like the hissing of a little cat, but paid no attention to her, after all, Lydia was Charles's business—and a good thing too!

"Is it five o'clock yet?

"It struck five just now," said Lydia after a little pause. Her eyes set swords between them, but the Unknown Lady returned a look so gentle that the steel seemed by some magic power, to vanish.

'Oh," she said, and fell silent, but filled her silence with a diffident smile that trailed its sweetness from one to another of her stunned audience. According to Gammon, the situation seemed at this point to pass out of the realms of the actual—as though none of them had existence outside of a dream. "Then the train from the North will be in."

"I've just come off it," snapped Lydia (Gammon says her fingers were twitching).

Oh. Well, that's all right. I shall be able to get into my own house. After a questioning glance which seemed to establish, for her, the relationship between Charles and Lydia, she held out her gloved hand to Gerald. "Thank you so much. I've had a lovely sleep.

"I'm so glad" gushed Gerald with an *empressement* that made her visibly shrink a little. Once more she sent her doubtful glance towards the others, before re-addressing him.

They said you were in the country. I'm sorry you came back. Only I'm glad, because I can thank you."

"I'm sorry," hazarded Gerald 'that you lost your handbag. I mean, I'm sorry on your account."

"Yes. That part was true," she said, eyeing him gravely. "It was stolen as I came off the boat. And I didn't know what to do because I was supposed to spend the night in a hotel, till my people arrived from the North in the morning. You see it's the first time I've been in England since I was a little girl.

Lydia says that it was only then that they all noticed that the girl had, as a matter of fact, the very faintest flavour of a foreign accent. they all three quarrelled later as to what country it represented. Charles still swears it was French, but Lydia plumps dead for Viennese, while Gerald is inclined to stick to his original impression that it was nothing more outlandish than a very slight Northern Irish brogue. He, naturally as the one directly addressed, returned the suitable answer to her explanation.

"How frightfully inconvenient for you!—but Charles made some kind of sympathetic murmur, which had the effect of moving Lydia closer to his side, with a slight policing movement.

I travelled up from Southampton with two girls. I did not know either of them. They were talking rather loudly about you.

'People shouldn't talk in trains—really!" stammered Charles. The Unknown Lady considered him for a moment, then turned her head politely away from him, towards Gerald.

One of them said you were staying in the country with Lord Rendle. Then the other one said, 'If ever I got into any kind of trouble in the world, I'd go to Charles Pollen. he'd help anyone—from his best friend to a complete stranger without asking a single question, and if it happened to be a stranger—Charles is such a gentleman he wouldn't even ask her name!'"

Gerald's features became slightly convulsed in his efforts to register the correct acknowledgment of this misdirected compliment, behind Lydia, Charles smirked self-consciously. compliments to one's face were abominable but there was something not unpleasing about them when they were rendered in this oblique fashion.

'Please open the door for me,' said the Unknown Lady. For the second time she held out her small gloved hand to Gerald. 'Thank you, my dear,' she said. "May I say something? People with your reputation should not have their names in the telephone book. it's too dangerous!

And with these words, still obviously taking Gerald for Charles Pollen, she passed out like a gentle ghost, seemingly untroubled by the fact that Gerald was still carrying her dressing-case, and that he was tearing downstairs to get her a taxi.

And that is the whole story, except that when Gerald returned the only thing he had to report was that she had said through the window of the taxi—

'Please don't blame your servant, he took every precaution. I'm sorry I had to tell him a few stories, but I didn't know what else to do.'

They never knew her name, they never heard or saw anything that gave them any clue to the identity of their unknown guest.

She simply vanished, as a ghost vanishes . . . and when Gerald told the yarn at a party a few nights later, someone said it was a jolly good yarn, except for the ending, which was rotten. No one ever pretended to believe it, until Lydia for some reason chose to corroborate it—although everyone saw that she was furious with Gerald for telling them all about it.

Because the most satisfactory part of the story, that which concerns Charles and Lydia themselves, was not the kind of thing one broadcasts at a party, even for the sake of rounding off a yarn in a suitable manner. It was a long time before that part of the affair got round, and then only because Lydia, in some burst of confidence or other, told a girl who told a girl—one knows how women talk.

It seems that Lydia was singularly silent, after Gerald's departure, beyond remarking that she did not care for Chanel's perfumes, and asking Charles to open the window, she said nothing until she was in bed. Her call reached Charles faintly through the dressing-room door.

'Charles,' came a murmur from the pillow. "I meant this time to make you *promise* you'd give me my divorce.'

"Darling, I hate not doing anything you ask me, but don't you think you might rather hate it?" said Charles, miserably. 'I mean—even worse than being married to me?'

The sleek dark head on the pillow nodded violently.

"Yes, I think so. You see—oh, Charles, you are a beast standing over there so stiffly . . . That's better. You see, *I* know it's truth—what that girl said, no, not the one who slept here, the other—in the train."

"That was rot," mumbled Charles, from the silken entanglement of his wife's hair.

"I don't think I want to be divorced, after all," murmured Lydia. "I think I'd rather stay, and look after your reputation!"

# THAT KID!

"[illegible] said Schuler [illegible] of me as I looked in the Penitentiary [illegible] replied Hacksmith [illegible] charge the boat off Farm Cove, diving gear on board, grub for six months, and Maltby in the hospital with Delirium Trimmins. Who's to stop us?"

"I know," said Schuler, "but the bother is, Delirium what's-its-name don't stop him from being the owner of the boat and gear, and chaps come out of hospitals, and when he comes out of hospital beatin' a drum and raising Cain——"

"You make me tired," said the other. "Am't I his partner with right to carry on [illegible] and out, on Circular Quay, stood me a drink, found I knew all about deep-sea diving and didn't care a dump about the Law. Give me a dollar a day advance he did, and this rig-out I'm wearing, give me all his plans and the location of York Point Bay. We'd have been sailing this blessed morning only the drink laid him out."

Schuler looked away across Sydney Harbour. He was a youngish, not bad-looking individual of the marine type, but hard to place. As for Hacksmith, he was, frankly, a horror, and in the old days when seamen were allowed more room for development of character his place would have been among the pirates. He did what he could, no doubt, in present-day restricted circumstances, but, knowing him, one felt that all his doings were but pale shadows of acts that might have been committed in the good old days that lie beyond steam and wireless.

He did not lie to Schuler. Maltby *had* met him down and out on Circular Quay and, reckoning him the man he wanted, had fed him clothed him, and in a fit of alcoholic expansion given him the last details of his plan for ripping the bottom out of York Point Bay a dent in the coast away up in Queensland, a pocket crammed with oysters, Thursday Island size and quality, discovered by Maltby through chance on that lonely coast where life only shows in the smoke of a camp fire lit by black fellows.

Schuler, turning over the proposition in his mind, saw clearly the nub of it. Everything in the garden was lovely but for just one point—the question of theft. It would be a clear case of boat stealing—however, times were bad, honest work was worse, and beggars, as everyone knows, cannot be choosers.

The *Wave Jack* was her name, ketch rigged, with a small deck house and a petrol-paraffin engine for use in case of emergencies.

Leaving Sydney Harbour had been a simple matter and the winds had been favourable all the way up to Cape Flattery. The picture of Maltby coming out of the hospital beating a drum and raising Cain had faded to nothing, for up here in this blue and reef-strewn desolation Sydney seemed a million, million miles away.

Wanting a third hand to help in the diving, Hacksmith had practically shanghaied a nigger out of a doggery on James Street. Jimbo was this gentleman's name, who proved, when the drink was at last out of him, a very child in mind, speech, and outlook; but he was no use as a diver. On the morning they started work he proceeded to get into the diving suit with alacrity and delight. Pleased as a child being togged up for a fair he stood in the suit that was to help him walk about on the bottom of the sea; but when they put the helmet on him he went frantic and had to be released. Having his head shut up in a box was a different thing from walking about like a gentleman on the bottom of the sea, which had been his desire.

He was no use, but he could help to turn the handle of the pump whilst one of the others did the under-water business, the worst and most wearing end of that unromantic, foul, and heart-breaking job—pearling.

There were lots of oysters, great things the size of soup plates, lots and lots of them, but in seven fathoms—nearly fifty feet of water. Nothing much, since the Paumotuan divers will pick up shell at fifteen fathoms and do it naked, but enough for Schuler after his first go down as he sat contemplating the thirty-five pairs of shell that he had sent up in the net bag.

"You'll come to it in time," said Hacksmith, who was dealing with the catch. "I'm not grumbling, though my back's near broke with the pumping. It ain't as easy as picking daisies, but it's nothing once you're used to it."

"Shucks," said Schuler. He was sitting

on an inverted tub a viewpoint from which he could see the whole of York Point Bay

It is less a bay than a half-moon-shaped dip in the coast, and the recession is so slight that from where the ketch was anchored the coast was visible fading into the haze of distance under the everlasting sunshine. Far inland ragged hills cut the sky and the flat lands between hills and sea showed broken and verdureless except for cactus and bay cedar bushes, with no sign of living thing except, rising from a vast stretch of bush near the shore, a thin column of smoke

'Some blackfellows camp,' said Hacksmith when his attention was called to it, and he was right, for later that day towards sundown, half-a-dozen figures appeared on the beach. They stood as if contemplating the *Wear Jack* and its doings, but they showed no sign of recognition or response to the signals of the Wear-Jackites.

They stood, contemplated, and then, as though disapproving of the sight before them turned and went

Hacksmith had found an old cocoa tin in the galley and proposed to use it as a receptacle to hold the catch He put a layer of cotton wool in the bottom, and that evening the result of the day's work went into the tin—one single pearl Not much, seemingly to show for all that labour but it was of good size and shape, and worth maybe fifty pounds

They discussed this matter as they sat that night smoking their pipes under the light of an outrageous moon in a silence broken only by the sound of the sea on the reef and Jimbo snoring in the fo'c'sle.

They did a lot of talking of nights, and all the way up from Sydney had turned over numerous subjects from Lang to the existence or non-existence of an Almighty.

Schuler was a hard-boiled Socialist Hacksmith a believer in the rights of property they agreed to differ on these matters, but the grouse of Schuler against things as they are in the monetary world peeped out to-night when he compared the result of their hard day's labour with the pay handed over for nothing at all to a shipowner, or for just powdering her nose and making googly eyes, to a film star

Fifty pounds, which means, going equal shares, only twenty-five pound apiece' said he— and that's leaving out the nigger'

Equal which?' asked the believer in the rights of property

'Shares,' replied the disciple of Marx 'You aren't denying that's the agreement between us?"

"I aint' denying nothing," replied the other, only that it's early days to be talking of sharing what we haven't got"

THE ghost of a river came down to the sea almost opposite to where the ketch was lying and early one morning before starting work they rowed the dinghy off to it and filled a couple of water casks.

As they rowed back they did not notice something like a brown slug on the half-submerged rock which lay astern of the ketch, nor, later, as they were busy with the diving gear, did they notice it slipping into the water like a seal

A splash alongside drew Schuler's attention He looked over the starboard rail and gave a shout

"It's one of them niggers, he's dived—chngin' on to the chain he was——"

Hacksmith looking over to port drew back as if hit in the eye by a head that broke from the water

The owner, having released the anchor chain, had, evidently, dived right under the ketch.

# H. de Vere STACPOOLE

*Illustrated by EDWARD OSMOND*

"It's a Mary," cried he, "ain't more than a kid—come off to have a look at us, hi! there." He whistled as one might to attract a dog, and the face of the swimmer upturned and sunlight showed a flash of teeth. Then the head vanished, reappearing half a cable length away, not to return. It was making for the rock. They saw the form dragging itself up on the rock and Schuler, taking the old glass from its sling by the mast looked through it.

The apparition was seated, hands clasping knees and eyes fixed on the ketch. She was brown as a hickory nut, motionless as a graven image, and the hair of the head, dank a moment ago with sea water began, even as Schuler watched, to fluff out in the sun like a halo. It was hot enough to have fried an egg on that rock, but she did not seem to mind the heat.

Yes, she was a kid right enough, did not seem more than fifteen, if that, and the face with eyes wrinkled against the glare was not unpleasant.

"Looks to me like a half-caste," said Schuler, handing the glass to the other. "Ain't squash-nosed like the niggers—what do you make her out?"

But before Hacksmith could give an opinion the object on the rock had slipped into the water, making for the shore and evidently for the camp that was already putting up its smoke.

"Curse her," said Hacksmith. "Now, maybe, she'll be bringing those black fellows on top of us, swimmin' out with knives in their teeth."

"Not she," said the other. "If they were on that game they'd be doing it themselves without her help anyhow, talking won't buy the

baby a new frock, kim on and get into the diving dress it s your turn to go down first to-day "

Lock was with them. At the end of a fortnight of hard labour, labour that galley slaves would have kicked at, they had hived thirty four pearls. One a giant, seven large, and the rest medium sized. Their taskmaster was the giant. They had found it on the second day and the lust of cupidity it had released in their minds kept them diving like beavers from dawn to sunset

Hacksmith said it was worth all of two thousand pounds. Schuler believed him, and as the luck grew all through those blazing days the fact that the diving girl was generally round about, observing them swimming close to them, and flashing her teeth at them when they hauled her was

*She came up the anchor chain like a squirrel, and perched on the heel of the bowsprit, ready to dive at a moment*

of as little concern to them as the smoke of the blackfellows' camp.

All that was left of mind was half taken up with visions of pursuit. Maltby began to get alive now—if he wasn't dead, which was probable, seeing that delirium tremens rarely kills, he must have been out of the hospital a long time now—beating his drum and raising Cain. Hacksmith, sometimes pausing in his labours to wipe the sweat out of his eyes, would scan the far horizon for the smoke of a patrol boat, but the sea showed nothing.

Sometimes the blackfellows from the camp would appear on the beach hunting for shellfish or what not, but showing little or no interest in the strangers—the kid, to use Schuler's expression, was the only one of the outfit that seemed concerned with them, growing bolder and bolder, calling out at them sometimes, till, one day towards sunset as they were seated on deck opening the catch and, as if sure of their friendship, she came up the anchor chain like a squirrel, perched on the heel of the bowsprit and squatted, flashing her teeth at them and ready to dive at a wink.

"Hello, Juliana!" cried Hacksmith. He went on with his work as did Schuler. Jumbo alone seemed concerned. "Dat kid," said he in a tone of disgust, "she belong black fella, no good—me heave a shell at her——"

"Close down, you black nigger,' said Hacksmith. 'Ain't you black yerself—how's she hurtin' you? She ain't doing any harm." He was feeling the flesh of the oyster he was working at; his finger and thumb closed together, and out, like a glistening bubble, came a small pearl.

There you are," said he. He was addressing himself. He had felt somehow that the diving kid had brought them luck; anyhow she had not brought them bad luck, and this pearl popping up at the moment seemed a confirmation of the idea.

He held it out in his palm to her. Her brow wrinkled for a moment, then she grinned. Not a word, yet she could talk to them quite plainly as men talked to one another before they made the blunder of inventing speech.

She said to them: I'm friendly, but not quite sure of you; come forward a step and—overboard I go. What's that you have taken out of the big shell and are showing me? And why are you holding it out? Aha! I know: you want me to come and take it, so that you may catch me—can you see the white of my eye? Can you see any green in it?

Schuler suddenly slapped himself on the thigh.

"What's the big idea?" asked Hacksmith.

"Get her to dive for us," said Schuler. "Now she's friendly she'd do it for fun if we show her how."

"And how are you going to show her?"

Schuler brooded on this question a moment, then he rose up and went aft to the deck house and fetched the pearl tin, poured some of the contents into his hand, showed them, pointed to the empty oyster shells and then, giving the tin to Hacksmith, took up an unopened oyster and showed it to her.

Then, without approaching her, he came to the starboard rail and pointed down into the water.

With a bird-quick movement she glanced down where he had pointed and back again. Then he made movements indicating the movements of a person picking up oysters and bringing them to the surface. She seemed to understand, but she did not dive.

"Heave the oyster over, you chump," cried Hacksmith. "Maybe she'll dive and pick it up—that will larn her."

Schuler did as he was bid, and she dived. A moment later she was on the surface with the recovered oyster.

Grown bold now through the intimacy of sport she held it up out of the water and let Schuler take it from her. Then she paddled about, watching and waiting, but showing no sign of any desire to work for her living or their benefit.

Schuler, with a despondent lower lip, flung the oyster over again, just on chance.

It was retrieved immediately and joyously and handed up.

She would play a day at this game just as a dog retrieves stones, but she wouldn't work.

Recognizing this, they ignored her and sat down again to their business, and presently, as there was no more fun to be had for the moment, she swam off shorewards.

"WHAT I want to know," said Schuler that night as they sat smoking and resting their weary limbs, "is what's your proposition about the boat? Sell her at Port Moresby, you said some time ago—well, all I can say is this, the luck's too good to last. I feel in my bones that Maltby is alive and kicking, he's otter as sure—it's in the nature of things—and if we get out of this and through Torres without being nabbed we're fortunate. No, Java is the place for me, or Portuguese Timor, but over everything we have to get out of this place quick. I'm fed. I don't want to do another dive or turn another crank."

"Give us three days more," said Hacksmith, "and I'm with you. I've got a

*"Come on—after her," said Schuler "Dat kid!" cried Jimbo He threw up his hands as though that was all there was to be said about the girl.*

hunch there's better luck to come and it will come in a three

Schuler did not reply for a moment, then he said, "Well, I don't mind, but, if I do there's one thing clear, I bag the girl."

"Which girl? Oh, that piece. Why, what you want that fuzzy gollywog for?"

"Put her in a girl's missionary asylum, what else? What you want sticking your oar into my affairs for? She gave me the glad eye twice this blessed afternoon—that's why and that's what—and she ain't a nigger."

"Who says she was?"

"She's a half-caste and a good lookin one at that——"

"Listen here," said Hacksmith, "we don't want that tribe over there after us as well as Maltby—besides, how are you to take her away? She's as wild as a molly mauk—Lord! Sully!"

"I'll take her away right enough—there's nothing much about women I don't know—bottle her in the deck house is as good a plan as any, gettin' her in there with biscuits or something—ain't there a tin of sugar biscuits in the lazarette or has that nigger scoffed them?"

"Oh, go hang," said Hacksmith.

BUT two days later, so far from attempting to distract this Lothario from his obvious intention, Hacksmith suddenly took the part of egger-on.

The lady, dripping and grinning, had grown bold enough to squat on the deck instead of the bowsprit heel. Any attempt to grab her had failed, but Hacksmith, instead of being thankful and leaving well alone, suggested that the other should land and wait for her. "Then when she comes ashore you can run her down on the beach like a turkey," said Hacksmith, a proposition which the other did not fall in with nor would it have been of any use, for next morning the camp amongst the scrub put up no smoke to the sky. It was gone. And she was gone.

"You should have caught her when you had the chance," sneered Hacksmith as he levelled the glass across the grey-green burning desolation of the scrub. "You knew all about women, didn't you? Well, I'm not grumblin. Hullo, there's something moving in the scrub away over there—maybe it's her they've left behind. Row ashore in the dinghy and wait on the beach and if she shows her nose don't stop to bark but chivvy her down."

"Teach your grandmother," said Schuler, one leg over the rail.

As he dropped into the dinghy Hacksmith dived below and got busy with the petrol paraffin engine, tuning it up, for Hacksmith had conceived the plan of leaving Schuler on the beach!!!

Schuler and his desire for half profits and the girl—if he could find her. There was water in the ghost of a river and he would find berries and things amongst the bushes, and it would not be long before a rescue party arrived—for he knew with the knowledge born of instinct that the trail was humming with the hounds of pursuit and that any moment now the far-flung talons of the Law might close on them.

The idea had occurred to him only vaguely up to this, but it was full-blown now as he tested the engine.

As for Jimbo, he had Jimbo entirely in his pocket. The creature was a child who would do his every bidding and over whom he had developed a personal ascendancy which he felt to be complete.

Having fixed matters up with the engine he came on deck.

Schuler had landed and was pulling the dinghy up a bit. Schuler was safe now—row as hard as he might he could not get back before the anchor was up and the engine started—that being so he could not get back at all.

"Look you here, Jimbo, you black gob of mud," said Hacksmith, pointing to the beach, "he's not coming back, he's gone after the girl, so I'm leaving him—all the more pearls for you and me, Jimbo—you understand, Jimbo?"

"Yes, massa," answered the childish creature. "Jimbo understand."

"When the anchor's up and I'm down below looking after the engine you've got to do the steering. Do you see that break in the reef with two rocks on either side, you've got to steer for that."

"Yes, massa."

Hacksmith dived below again to make extra sure of the engine. In five minutes he was back.

They had a spare anchor so he determined not to use the winch but knock the shackle off the chain and leave chain and anchor. He did this whilst Jimbo took the wheel and the *Wear Jack*, turning gently to the current, began to drift.

Hacksmith went below and started the engine.

It was a fifty-horse-power Kellog's petrol paraffin engine made in 1909, and it talked about its age. Hacksmith summed up its conversational powers when he said that it talked like a damned dredger, and when he reached the deck again he found that its voice had reached the beach, for Schuler was now putting off and putting off in a hurry.

Hacksmith kissed the tips of his fingers at him, observed that Jimbo was steering

true for the reef opening and then stepped into the deck-house to touch that for which he had risked so much

The cocoa tin containing the pearls was kept quite openly on a shelf He took the tin down It was empty

SCHULER at the first sound of the engine had turned racing back to the dinghy he got her afloat, seized the sculls and started A glance over his shoulder showed him that the ketch was heading for the reef opening Too breathless to curse, he laid to the sculls It was hopeless—and yet to his mind busily engaged in skinning Hacksmith alive there seemed one ray of hope—the engine He reckoned he knew that engine and its capacity for breaking down There was no wind, if the thing crocked the situation would be saved

Glory! the thing had crocked a glance over his shoulder showed him the ketch voiceless and drifting a cable length from the reef and as he closed up with her another glance showed Hacksmith, a frantic figure shouting something about pearls

Alongside, the storm broke out

"What a' you done with them pearls? Gone! They're gone!—Clearin out and leavin you! I wasn't—I was only shifting the anchorage—here, shy us the painter and come a' board They're gone—tin empty—gone"

Schuler on deck stood facing the other whilst Jimbo, forward, was dropping the spare anchor

"Gone!" cried he, everything else for the moment forgotten

"Gone!" raved Hacksmith, kicking the empty cocoa tin into the scuppers "And if you ain't took them she has—who else? Sneaked aboard while we were asleep—you and your girls!"

"Hell's blazes and cats! What are you talkin about? Who showed that pearl to her? You, you blistered idiot—well, she's got them Kim on—after her"

"Dat kid" cried Jimbo who had come aft He threw up his hands as though that was all there was to be said about that girl and moral obliquity in general

They raged ashore and hunting down the blackfellows' camp found nothing but ashes of camp fires, bones, and a stake to which a goat had been tethered

Next morning starting to pearl again they found the pump had given out just as though fate had tampered with it.

It was the last straw, but they still had the boat to sell and putting out they came through Torres Straits and the Arafura Sea, steering a course for Java

At Salong they got rid of the nigger by giving him shore leave and a dollar and instructions to avoid bad company, and not to get drunk, putting out again as soon as he had disappeared up the quay and steering a course for Tandjong Priok

Here you can sell boats, and here they sold the *Wear Jack* and the diving gear buying a prahu narrow as a sword, swift as an arrow and fitted with an outrigger Hacksmith said that there were things to be done in Sulu waters hence the purchase He had bought, one morning, a copy of the *Signal Halyard* the English-printed paper that circulates in the East, and he was seated on a teak log reading it in Hieroschoff's yard, where the prahu was having her overhaul, when Schuler heard him swear

"What's up?" asked Schuler

"That damn kid!" cried Hacksmith She hadn't no hand in them pearls. *Lord* love a duck—it's as clear as paint He must have did it when I went below to overhaul the engine leavin' him on deck Come to think of it, how could she have swum on board of a night without our hearin her——"

"What in Jerusalem are you ravin' about?" asked the other

Hacksmith handed him the paper, pointing to a paragraph which read —

A MAN OF COLOUR

*On Tuesday night the police of Salong arrested a negro for disturbing the Public Order in Hooft Straat It seems that besides proclaiming himself the Emperor of America he was very drunk and playing on an accordion. Also, when searched at the police station, he was found in possession of a pearl of considerable size, also a large sum of money in guilder notes one of which has been traced as having been paid him by a dealer in the jewellery bazaar The police are anxious for more information about this man from jewellers or others who may have lost property Description Height, five feet eight, pure negroid type Dressed in a cherry-coloured blazer blue striped shirt white cotton trousers, and wearing two pairs of silk socks of different colours, also a pair of patent leather shoes, No. 11*

The reaction of Schuler to the disastrous and irrevocable was quite different to that of the raging Hacksmith

"Well," said he, handing the paper back, "it ain't your fault that he's jugged When you gave him that dollar you told him to beware of drink and bad company—didn't you? You couldn't have done more could you? —so what are you cryin' about?"

Then he went off and, wandering to the wharf side where the prahu was moored, stood and spat into the sea

# THE COMIC SIDE OF THE CINEMA

## FENN SHERIE

CINEMALAND where every player is a star every director an ace, every film an epic, and every theatre a palace, takes itself so seriously that it cannot help being funny One has only to study some of the posters outside the picture theatres to discover many gems of unconscious humour

"The Perfect Wife—100% Talking," says one

"The Wages of Sin—1s. 6d. before 2 p.m.," announces another

'As You Desire Me—For Three Days Only,' proclaims a third.

Sometimes, when there is a double-feature programme the juxtaposition of titles produces even more amusing results. Here are some recent examples —

"Discarded Lovers Sailors Don't Care." Men Without Women The Wiser Sex."

"Maurice Chevalier in One Hour with You—Lucky Ladies.'

It does not follow, however, that the publicity men are devoid of a sense of humour Some of their exploits provide positive proof to the contrary

Some years ago, for instance, a sensation was caused in a famous hotel by the discovery that an eccentric old musician who was staying there had, by importing a large wooden case which was supposed to contain his piano, actually smuggled a live lion into his room

A terrified servant found the animal roaming at large and rushed to inform the manager The manager told the police, the police told the *Press*, and very soon a horde of police officers and reporters was clamouring at the professor's door

"Come in," said the musician

They opened the door, saw the lion, and stayed outside.

'Don't be alarmed," said the old man, as he stroked the mane of his pet. 'Leo has been with me ever since he was a cub, and he is perfectly tame. I have brought up many pets like this. It is my belief that if you catch them and train them from babyhood even the fiercest beasts will become domesticated. In fact I'm shortly going to Africa to try a similar experiment with wild animals in their natural surroundings."

The newspapers could not resist that story They all featured it prominently and quoted the words of the eccentric old professor, who gave his name as Mr T R Zann. Then, as soon as the topic of the man who could tame wild beasts caught the imagination of the public a cinema theatre suddenly announced the world première of a film entitled "Tarzan of the Apes. Meanwhile, the professor and his lion had returned to the circus from which they had been hired

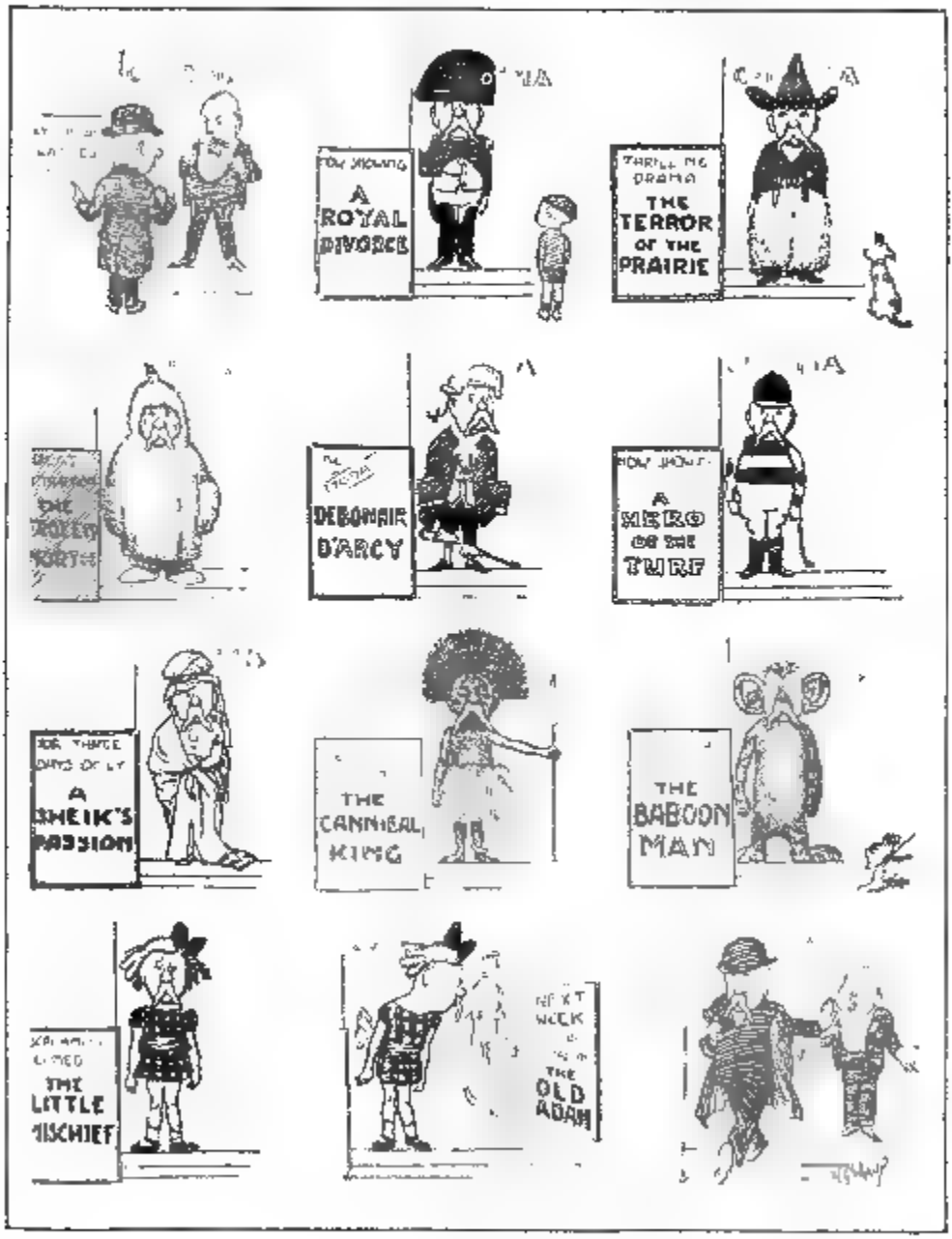
A cinema lobby display consisting of a number of photographs of scantily-dressed ladies, led to an amusing incident in the West-end of London recently. A motorist who had stepped inside for a moment to inquire the times of the performances returned to find a policeman standing beside his car

'I shall report you for leaving the car

unattended for ten minutes," said the policeman.

"Ten minutes!" protested the motorist. "Why, that's absurd. I only popped in for a moment to ask the times of the show."

"You can't get away with that, sir," replied the constable with a knowing smile. "Why, this morning it took me a quarter of an hour to look at them pictures myself!"

Percy Marmont, the popular film actor who, of course, has a large following of

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THE LAST STRAW

By permission of "The Humorist"

"That reminds me, Albert. Our Income-tax is due to-morrow."

feminine "fans" figured in another amusing incident with a policeman not long ago. He, too, left his car unattended and returned to find a constable busily taking notes. When asked for his name and address, he produced his licence. The policeman examined it for a moment, then peered into the actor's face.

"It isn't Percy Marmont, the film star, is it, sir?" he asked, anxiously.

"It is," replied the actor.

"Well, I'm sorry about this, sir," said the policeman, awkwardly.

"That's all right, officer," replied the star. "you have to do your duty."

"I'm not worrying about my duty,"

answered the bobby, "but I sha n't half get a telling off from my missus when she hears what I've done."

Marmont, by the way, has a fund of stories concerning the astute, but somewhat illiterate, men who control the productions in the Hollywood studios.

There is one producer, for instance, who is said to be so ignorant that he thinks an operetta is a telephone girl, and that a refugee is an umpire at a football match.

On another occasion, while watching the filming of a hunting scene, he is said to have objected to the appearance of the hounds.

"Say, those dogs are all alike," was his criticism. "You'll have to vary them a bit. Put in a few Sealyhams—they're fashionable nowadays."

Another supervisor who never believed in false economy was sitting in his office one day when an excited assistant rushed in and announced that the leading lady had fallen into the studio bathing pool and had nearly been drowned.

"I think she'll come round all right," said the assistant. "We're giving her artificial respiration."

"Artificial nothing!" shouted the anxious producer. "Give her the real stuff—we can afford it!"

Another impresario once invited a famous author to call upon him to discuss a contract to write scenarios. He was seldom known to give more than five minutes to an interview, but this one lasted over an hour. When eventually, the author emerged from the sanctum an anxious friend inquired what had happened to take up so much time.

"Didn't the old man know what he wanted?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, he knew what he wanted all right," replied the author. "The trouble was that he didn't know how to spell it."

The limited knowledge of the English language among the cosmopolitans of cinema land led to an amusing incident between Ernst Lubitsch the brilliant little German director, and Maurice Chevalier the French star.

During the making of a talkie, Maurice had to say "I give you my word." Naturally, he found the pronunciation a little difficult.

"Don't say 'verd,'" corrected Lubitsch, "say *verd*."

"But I did say *verd*," protested Chevalier.

"No you didn't," retorted Lubitsch, "you said 'verd.'"

At this juncture an American supervisor intervened.

Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch."

*Head Clerk.* "Don't you ever dare to call me big boy again! I've had quite enough of your film expressions."
*New Office-Boy.* "O.K., chief."

Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of "Punch"

*Husband* (much impressed) "You know, Clara, joking apart, it must be pretty awful to meet one of those vamps."

'You guys have both got it wrong," he said. "What you re trying to say is woid.' '

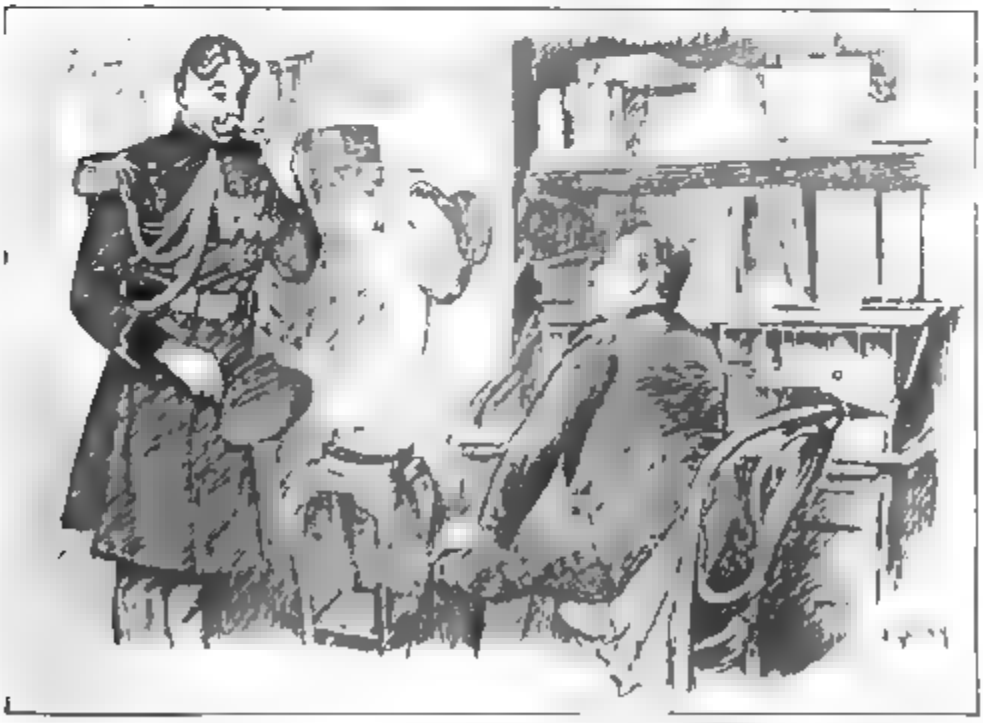
When it comes to expressing themselves in terse, vivid phrases, however, the Americans can always say a mouthful At a conference of executives a producer was trying to explain to his casting director the type of actress he required to play the *rôle* of a particularly seductive "vamp."

"Listen" he said "I want the kind of dame who starts a forest fire every time she kisses a tree '

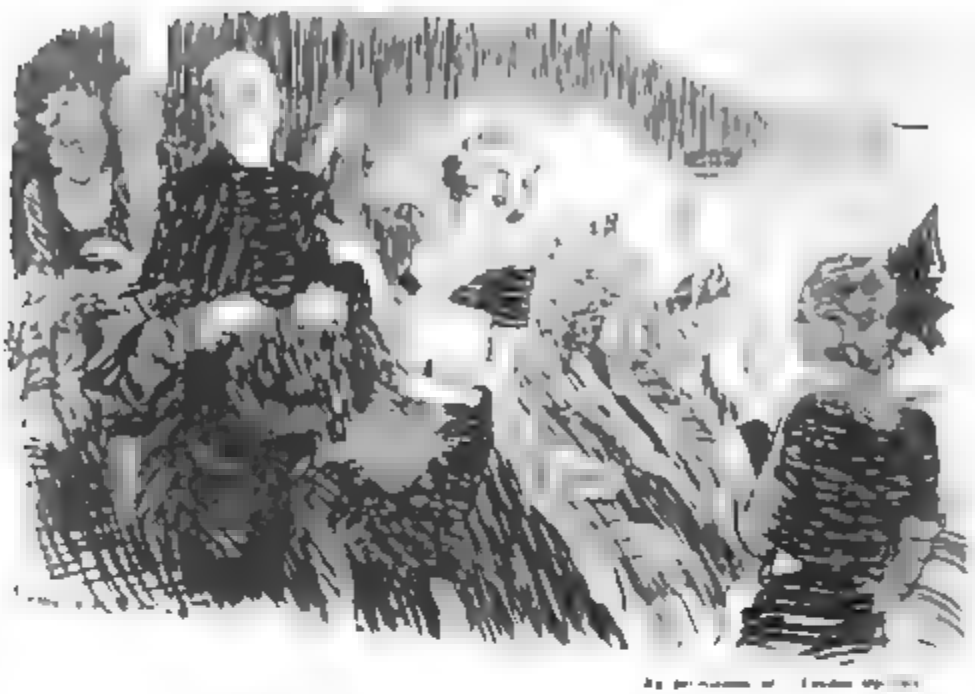
' Okay," replied the other man, "how about So-and-so ?"

"Aw, shucks!" snorted the producer contemptuously "Why, if you gave that dumb-bell the part of Lady Godiva, the darned horse would steal the picture. '

*Resident* "Special attractions, indeed! Why, Hilda, to my knowledge he's been employed there for years"



*Cinema Manager* "Jenkins, you've been with us a year now and your ten-shilling rise falls due"
*Door Attendant* "Thank you, sir. And how about wearing a uniform of a higher rank?"



*Attendant* "Ida, show the gentleman the way to 'L'"

Equally caustic was the producer whose leading lady, having decided to take an unofficial holiday, sent him a wire saying 'Doctor says I cannot act. Will forward certificate." His reply was "No medical evidence required'

There is a touch of cynicism, too, in the story of the magnate who, while watching a film in his private projection theatre, fell asleep

The man who had directed the picture shook him gently by the shoulder

'Wake up, sir" he said, anxiously "You can't give me an opinion of the picture if you go to sleep

My boy" replied the chief with a yawn, "I pay for an opinion"

Even more biting was the remark of a booking manager to whom a film salesman was showing an alleged comedy

"I can't book that' he said. "You know I won't have bad language in my theatre

'But there's no bad language in the film," protested the salesman

Never mind the film," was the reply What about the audience?'

Needless to say, audiences also have their funny side, as may be judged from some of the accompanying pictorial jests

One anecdote tells of an elderly female who was told that the management of the local cinema had greatly improved the acoustics of the theatre

'I am so glad to hear that she replied Now I shan't have to take a cushion with me

When the talkies were first introduced it was generally assumed that the cinema pest, who used to make a habit of reading the titles of the silent films aloud, would disappear But this individual has now developed a new vice—a habit of carrying on an irritating flow of domestic gossip during the run of the film, utterly regardless of others who are straining their ears to catch the dialogue

One of these human loud-speakers became so annoying that a man sitting behind her touched her gently on the shoulder

'Excuse me, madam," he ventured, politely I really can't hear a word that's being said

You weren't meant to,' she replied, tartly, 'this is a private conversation.'

# WARNING TO POETS

## JOHN HASTINGS TURNER

THE thing that I am going to tell you happened at one of the smaller fool-traps on the French Riviera. I am not going to tell you the name of the place, because I know a whole lot of people who live there, and whom you might meet. And they are inclined to think the entire story a scream and to tell it, at cocktail-time, to the accompaniment of roars of laughter.

Now to my mind there is nothing funny about the thing at all; in fact, the emotions I lived through during those few hours were the most intense, both in height and depth, that I have ever experienced. Mind you, when I look back at it, I am not prepared to deny that there was a certain element of irony about the thing.

But irony is not of necessity funny, and, anyway, if you've got to get a laugh out of it, I'd rather tell the story myself than let those idiots up at the Villa Miramar get any more amusement out of the affair over their cocktails. If it hadn't been for the cocktails I don't believe any of it would ever have happened.

I'd gone to the place for a holiday. I'd been working hard for a long spell at journalism, for although I had a little money of my own it was not enough to allow me to live as I wanted to live, and to my mind, a poet must have the right surroundings. What I mean is, you can't concentrate on the innate beauty of things in a bed-sitting-room off Tottenham Court Road. I daresay there have been exceptions, but who is to say how much better their work might have been had it been conceived on an old-gold divan, set in a broad window overlooking the rolling acres of some lovely park?

These theories of mine I had been ass enough to expound to those half-wits up at the Villa Miramar, and they had laughed like hyenas. Not that that really mattered. There will always be the groundlings. We needn't bother about that. You will realize that I am a poet, or, at least, that I was at that time. As a matter of fact the thing I was working on, an epic in hexameters round the lost cities of Atlantis, has never been completed, for reasons which you will see. But I still believe every now and then, that it would have been marvellous.

Well, as I have said, I had gone to the place for a holiday, and with a vague idea of making headway with the epic, but I may as well admit, here and now, that I behaved like a complete fool. It began with those cocktails. I used to go up to the Villa where they kept more or less open house every morning about twelve o'clock. By the time I came away any kind of work during the afternoon was out of the question. Then the rest of the day fell into a sort of routine: more cocktails round about six, then dinner at the Napoleon, then a dance or two, and afterwards, till the small hours, that idiotic game of *boule*, to the accompaniment of brandies-and-sodas, and the next morning, of course, no hope of any kind of work at all. You get into the rut and you can't get out of it.

Well, I'd been playing this kind of game for the best part of a month, and it looked

Illustrated by
DANIEL DAVIS

as if my holiday was going to leave me just about fit for a nursing-home. Then, one morning, with a headache like a hammer beating on my brain, I had a look at my cheque-book. What I saw pulled me up short. I actually hadn't got enough to get me out of the damned place. Of course, if I'd gone up to the Villa and told them the situation they'd have lent me the money readily enough. They were good sorts in that kind of way . . . But they'd have laughed themselves sick at the same time and I was a sensitive sort of fellow and I didn't feel I could bear that. And, eventually, of course, I did what every first-class imbecile does. I persuaded myself that the luck was bound to change, and I decided to risk the little I had left on that ridiculous

*She came out of the cabin and my fancies about fairies ceased from that moment, for this particular fairy was in a very modern, very crumpled evening dress.*

*boule*. I even persuaded myself I remember, that the whole thing was a rather big, romantic gesture. Byronesque. . . .

Ass, you say? I agree. And I'll bet you any money you like that you would have done the same thing. Well, never mind that. By the time I left the Casino I hadn't got a penny-piece in the world. And I was full up with cheap brandy into the bargain. Even then it never entered my head to go to my friends at the Villa. With a vague idea of cooling my head, I walked round to the little harbour and sat on the stones with my legs dangling within a foot of the water.

It was—a miracle for the Riviera—a warm night and I sat there for a long time watching the little orange light flashing at the mouth of the harbour, and, beyond, the moon dancing on the rippling water. Did I say I was a poet? Well, it may be that the moon struck me with a madness, or,

as my friends at the Villa must [illegible] have been the brandy, but however that may be the thought came to me that there was nothing more [illegible] and that there could be no lovelier way of leaving it than to [illegible] in the Mediterranean in the path of the moon, and then dive into the [illegible] I may not [illegible]

The idea took hold of me like an inspiration. It seemed at that moment the most beautiful thing in the world. I still think there was something rather magnificent about it [illegible] But I'm not allowed that sort of idea nowadays. I can hear my eldest son saying, "Don't be utterly fatuous, dad, old thing!" And I can hear his mother having him up for [illegible]

And I've an annoying feeling that they would be right. But in those days it was different. As I say, the idea swept over me like a cloud-burst and I remember scrambling to my feet and running along to the extreme end of the jetty and standing there with my arms outstretched, flinging winged words of greeting to the sea. At least, I thought they were winged words, at the time, but I daresay they were pure gibberish, really. And then I turned, and, right at my feet, there lay a little [illegible] cruiser with the water lapping musically against her bows. She had a jolly little cabin [illegible] and the seats all [illegible] rubber were covered with gay coloured cushions. I think it was the mocking colours of those cushions which called to me.

I TOOK a quick look round. There was not a soul in sight. It seemed a gallant sort of thing to set sail sitting on that carnival of cushions, and, from that jumping off ground to say good-bye to everything for ever. Seems mad to you, I expect, but you've got to remember that I was a poet. At the Villa Miramar they still insist that it was the brandy. I allow them their laugh. I find it beneath my dignity to argue the point. As for that eldest son of mine, I hope he'll never hear the story. He's a good chance for his blue at Rugger, and he has a laugh which could compete with Vesuvius in eruption.

Well, as I say, there was no one in sight, and I jumped down into the boat and had a look at the engine. It was a simple enough motor, and, after one more look round, I got her going, and feverishly cast off her painter. As I shot through the harbour mouth, I had an idea that I heard a cry a long way behind me. Maybe it was a harbour-master of the little place boasted such a thing, who had spotted me putting out without lights. But thirty harbour-masters could not have stopped me then! I remember, as I shot out into the open sea shouting something defiant over my shoulder, and then turning to the dancing silver streak ahead of me, hailing it as a friend.

And how that boat could move! The sheer sense of speed was intoxicating, quite apart from the brandy which was still whirling in my brain. Down the silver path I set her course and I still think that those first moments were the grandest that I have ever had. Well no, perhaps not. But that part of the affair comes later. I don't know how long I raced into the moon a eye before the thing happened. Perhaps an hour perhaps more. I don't know. But the hills of the Estérel were little blue mounds on my starboard side and the lights of the town were like far-off stars, and the brandy tore round in my brain just a little less madly when I heard a voice say:—

I can't bear it! I can't bear it!

For a moment I didn't believe in the thing. I was in the sort of state of exaltation when one accepts any phenomenon as right and proper. And my mind too, was occupied entirely with myself. Was I not within a few moments of extinction? It was no time for the ordinary speculations about facts and probabilities. I hardly noticed the cry and let the boat drive on. I began to wonder what would happen to me when I was gone, and how my friends would take it when my body was washed up—how that merry, silly party up at the Villa would take it. What amazingly self-centred creatures we all are!

Then I became aware of a head emerging from the little door of the cabin. It looked to me like the head of something which did not belong to this world at all. It looked like the head of a fairy in a panic. That sounds absurd, but they are the only words which I can find to describe the effect it had upon me. It was framed in a tangled mass of gold hair, and it had enormous violet eyes, with the whites showing all round them, and a tiny scarlet mouth, drooping and half-open. Then I thought the brandy had got me and that I was beginning to see the things that are not. And, again, I wondered whether perhaps queer things always float before the eyes of those about to die. But then the vision spoke.

I wasn't trying to steal your ship. I swear I wasn't," she moaned with the tears streaming down her cheeks. "I know you're bound to think I was, but I wasn't!"

And there she stopped, not because she had no more to say but because her tears were choking her. Partly, I think, to try to stop those tears, and partly because I was long past ordinary coherence, I said, foolishly:

"It's not my ship." The idea of calling that absurd motor-boat a ship

*I staggered across that reeling boat and untied the ropes.*
*"Listen," I said. "I'm afraid we're in a bad way."*

Then the rest of the vision crawled out of the cabin. My fancies about fairies ceased from that moment, for this particular fairy was in a very modern, very crumpled evening frock, with a long tear right up the side of the skirt.

"You see," she began. "You see—" And then her tears overcame her again. "You'll never understand!" she wailed.

Have I said I was a poet? I let go the tiller and took the crumpled bundle into my arms. She was a good boat, that, and understood the nature of poets. She just kept straight on her course up the path of the moon. I suppose the rudder jammed, or something, but I prefer to think that the boat knew that there were wild doings aboard that night, and that she would have to look after herself. I held the shaking girl in my arms and said—

"What's the matter? Tell me what's the matter?"

BUT it was some time before she could speak. When she did, she only repeated herself.

"You'll never understand," she said and again, "You'll never understand."

When you have been told a sufficient number of times that you are incapable of understanding a thing, you become annoyed. I was annoyed. I said, rather sharply—

"If you would explain, I might have a better chance of understanding."

The result of that was another outburst of tears like a Devon river in spate. I was aware of a sense of defeat. Looking over my shoulder, I saw that the lights of the town had disappeared and the hills of the Esterel were no more. And the girl clung to my knees and cried her soul out. The engine roared on and that very understanding boat hissed over the waters. And then the girl that I held in my arms began to talk, and what she said was something like this—

"You see—you see, I had nowhere to go. And I was tired. Tired of all of it. It's so easy if you're rich, like you, so easy, at least, I suppose it is. I don't know. I've never been rich. But I got a little legacy—a hundred pounds—and I thought I'd live . . for the first time. And—oh, I suppose my idea of living came out of silly books. I don't know. But I came out here and swanked about and got to know people I couldn't keep up with. But I tried to keep up . . . I tried wildly to keep up. . And then—of course. . . Well, there was a man. He told me that he loved me and I tried hard to tell myself that I loved him. He said I brought him luck, so I gave him my money to gamble with. . . It all went, of course, but it wasn't the money I cared about. I found him out, you see. . . . Oh well, it's an old story, isn't it? And who cares? Who cares?"

The tears came again, and I held her closer in my arms. Did I say that I was a poet?

She went on again at last. That boat was an angel among boats.

"So then," she said, "I just gave up. I'd simply made a muck of everything, you see, and there was nothing left. Not even the fare back to London. All I wanted was to remember nothing and to be nothing. So I went down to the harbour. But there were people about. They'd have got me out, you see. Then I thought of hiding myself, and waiting . . waiting until those cold small hours when nobody notices what anyone else is doing. And I crept in here. And now . . and now . . ."

She broke off again, and her tears splashed on my hands.

"Do you mean," I asked loosely, "that you meant to kill yourself?"

"Yes," she answered simply, and added, "And I can't hope that you will understand, can I?"

I said nothing. What could I say? Can you imagine a more ridiculous situation? Not that it appeared ridiculous to me at the time. It seemed to me terrific and insurmountable. I just held the girl in my arms and said nothing at all. What the devil was there to say? There were the two of us, set on doing away with ourselves, and nothing in the world to prevent us except the quite unreasonable feeling in my own mind that, whatever one may feel about oneself, other people are rather different. The whole thing was, of course, quite insane, but there it was. I had the idea that, if I allowed this absurd girl to jump overboard, I should have assisted at a murder. And so I proceeded to try to comfort her. And I comforted her, according to my lights, while that estimable and understanding boat plunged over the gentle sea, in the direction of Corsica. I said—

"It's a rotten sort of thing to do, really, isn't it? I mean, when you boil it all down, it's only shirking, you know!"

How I had the nerve to say anything of the kind I can't imagine.

"You're so much stronger than I am," she said.

How could I tell her that I was nothing of the sort? Quite apart from the fact that I liked the idea of being the stronger, I said—

"After all, there are worse things than losing one's money."

"Much worse," she agreed, "if, like yourself, you have plenty left."

*We were both flung into the sea, and I grabbed her wildly under the arms.*

As she spoke she suddenly stood up in the boat, and like lightning, I grabbed her wrist and pulled her down again. I had a sudden vision of her, in that purply-greenish water, turning over and over, with her frock seeping about her like sea-weed. It was not a picture I cared for. As I say, I grabbed her, and together we fell again into the bottom of that amazingly obliging boat.

"You're not to do that," I heard myself saying harshly. "Do you hear? You're never to do that again!"

She made no answer, but began to cry softly.

"And you needn't think," I went on, "that you're the only person in the world who's struck a patch of bad luck."

But still she made no answer.

"If you don't give me your word," I said, brutally, "that you're not going to try this game again, I'm going to tie you up."

She would give me no word, and I admired her for it But I tied her up all the same I cut a length off the light rope which had served as a painter, and I tied her wrists together behind her back, and then I tied that to a little bollard which was on the decking above the cabin She could stand or sit down, as she pleased—I'd given her enough rope for that—but she could no longer jump overboard

I WENT back to the tiller, and tried to collect my thoughts, to consider the position I'd have to get back, of course That was the first thing. And a nice sort of muddle I was going to be in when I *did* get back and the owner asked me what the hell I thought I'd been doing' However, that was one of to-morrow's bothers

I put the tiller hard over

The girl sat securely tethered on the seat at the side of the cabin door She wasn't being a martyr at all She seemed to regard my action as a reasonable precaution, and as only another example of the bad luck which dogged her Tied up, she looked more attractive than ever

The boat swung about, and I wondered where on earth I was To make things easier clouds were now scudding across the moon, and, not without apprehension, I noted low down on the horizon a long, low bank of them—as it were, waiting

What I knew about boats was negligible I was unwilling however to parade my ignorance before a girl whom I had just been he-man enough to rope to a bollard The thing after all, would seem simple enough The boat had swung right round and was now, presumably pointing the other way—that is to say landwards. But this simple proposition is not, apparently true of boats. We moved on for the best part of three-quarters of an hour, and at some considerable speed—but neither light nor sky-line showed up

I had in this extremity, entirely forgotten my own determination to provide food for the myriad-coloured fish of the Mediterranean and was feeling—in every way—decidedly less of a poet

The girl said nothing at all. But I suddenly noticed that she shivered, and became aware that it was cold I left the tiller and dived into the tiny cabin. I found a rug, and by the grace of God, half a bottle of brandy I tucked the rug round her and put the brandy to her lips. Then again I asked her to give me her parole. But she shook her head

I was going to expostulate when the boat seemed, all of a sudden to lose her good manners, and a good deal of water slopped in over the side I looked round and noticed, to my astonishment that the sea was covered with little white crests, and a wind was whipping my cheeks. I dived for the tiller again and put her nose into the seas. I'd not the faintest idea where we were headed for now but I'd a vague notion that this was the proper thing to do.

It was ten minutes later that a splutter a few coughs diminuendo, and total silence, told me that the petrol had run out

I looked at the girl She shrugged her shoulders

'Petrol' she said, in a dull fatalistic way

'I'm afraid so,' I replied, foolishly

'How silly of you' she answered, drearily

'I told you,' I said, 'that it was not my boat

'Then what are you doing on it?'

That, so to speak, winded me No immediate story—or none which stood the least likelihood of being believed—sprang to my mind Another wave smacked against the side and poured a little cascade on to the boards

'I wonder if there's anything to bale with,' I said, and looked stupidly about me

The girl smiled in a tired sort of way

'I don't think,' she said, 'you need bother There's a storm coming up, just about as quick as it can, and with no steerage-way you've not a chance in a million Need I be still tied up, when we sink?

'We're not going to sink," I answered stoutly

But I was pretty certain we were, for all that The wind had freshened and the waves with it and whatever complimentary things I may have said about that boat I withdrew unreservedly She bucketed about like a crazy thing She shipped water from every direction And there sat the girl like—was it Andromeda?—smiling and unafraid

I must have been very stupid It took me a long time to realize the danger we were in When I did, I staggered across that reeling boat and untied the ropes

"Listen,' I said I'm afraid we're in a bad way'

She rubbed her hands together to restore the circulation.

'I've known that,' she answered calmly 'for some time

A great gout of spray smacked me in the mouth and I cursed.

'And look here,' I said, 'I've behaved abominably Because, you see, I was out for the same purpose as yourself'

'We're lucky then, she returned, for it looks as if Nature is going to do the job for us'

But listen! I shouted—I had to shout now for the wind was howling like a lot of wild beasts— I don't want that any more'

You don't seem,' she screamed in my ear "to be able to make up your mind about anything for long at a time' '

And she was actualy smiling

I roared back into the teeth of the wind

Don't you see that you have made al the difference?

Her lips moved, but I could not catch what it was she said. At any rate, thank God, she was still smiling

What a courtship! Because that is what it was—upon my side, at any rate I felt that if I could pull this girl out of this mess, and set her on a pillion at my back, on some great white horse. .

Oh, well did I say I was a poet? I felt all those things, but a car would have served just as well or even the ordinary *Rapide* to Calais. That swimming up the path of the moon until I could swim no more! I must have been as tight as an owl'

I KEPT on shouting at her and she kept on saying things I couldn't hear but smiling all the time And the storm grew and hurtled around us, and the water sloshed around in the bottom of the boat and it began to be borne in upon me seriously, for the first time, that my courtship was likely to have its beginning and end in this cursed Mediterranean And where, after all, had I arrived? All she had done was to sit there and smile

I rooted out an old tobacco-tin which was slopping about under one of the seats and started baling like a madman I went on telling her how much I loved her as I splashed about in the water As for the baling I might as well have tackled the Flood with a fountain-pen filler For every tinful I chucked over the side, about seventy came in But it was a relief to have something to do

At last I heard her mouth close to my ear

It's quite useless," she shouted quite and absolutely useless' '

I shook my head and went on I knew she was right, of course The sweat was pouring down into my eyes and I could feel my heart racing. Again she shouted in my ear

" Picture of a man who is tired of life! she said

This girl had the pluck of a Guardsman But in the end I had to give it up. We were done There was no question about it I sat back, gasping, in the stern, and stared out at the curling waters. I had an intense desire to get an answer from her before they took us to themselves and tucked us away to sleep.

I took her hand and screamed

'If things were different would you marry me?'

But I never heard her answer Something extra large hit the boat and she heeled right over The water poured in like a cataract I stood up

Can you swim?' I shouted

She shook her head As the boat righted and lurched over to the other side, we were both flung into the sea. I grabbed her wildly under the arms and started to swim steadily on my back I don't know where I thought I meant to swim to Africa perhaps. I suppose, actualy one fights instinctively to the finish

Her hair bedraggled but still gold, flopped about on my chest I seemed to be swimming for ever I remember the first thing I felt was that my knees went numb And then my arms no longer seemed to belong to me But I went on mechanically Everything seemed to get suddenly bright and I wondered whether this was what always happened just before the end Then I realized that it was the moon which had come out again It seemed that I was to be fated to carry out my original poet's plan. .

Then, suddenly, I knew that I had come to the finish . . . I think I gasped. Good bye, darling'—I don't know I lost consciousness When I came to, I was still in the water I seemed to be floating along quite easily, and I could feel the water thrashing at the back of my neck. I had no feeling of panic I suppose I was past that On the contrary it all seemed rather soothing and wonderful. I even felt sleepy Something was supporting me under the arms. I wondered why people said drowning was so unpleasant. . .

Then, from a long way off, I heard a voice shouting in French Bravo, bravo, mademoiselle One more little minute'

I suppose I lost consciousness again The next thing I knew was the feel of blankets and a hot-water bottle and a curious sense of vibration Then the face of a little fat yellow-complexioned man with a waxed moustache bent over me

So! he said. Excellent' As he said so, I supposed it was so

A brandy -hot," he added, " with one lump of sugar

And after certain minutes I remember a brandy—hot—and, I suppose, a lump of sugar, though I couldn't taste it

Then slowly and with infinite pains, my brain came back to me

Later on, I was allowed to see her. It appeared that the look-out on the Nice-Corsica packet had spotted us in the moonlight, and they had lowered a boat and picked us up. A chubby-looking officer told me all about it, and how the girl was still smiling when they picked us out of the water—as she swam strongly with her arms about me.

"A veritable heroine. I remember he called her, and he must have thought me an ungrateful boor, for I answered nothing at all.

I was wondering why on earth.

And a little later on, I asked her:

Why, I said, did you tell me that you couldn't swim?

She was an honest creature, and I have never known her beat about the bush about anything.

Because, she answered, 'I made certain that we were going to die, and I wanted to die in your arms!'

That was the way in which she accepted my proposal.

NOBODY could have been nicer to us than those people on the Corsica boat. And you've got to remember we hadn't a sou between us and the clothes we wore were borrowed. The French, when they scent a romance, go perfectly crazy.

I rang up the Villa Miramar and they came to the rescue in a Hispano-Suiza, the mere sight of which was enough to inspire confidence. But I still don't see why they thought it all so fearfully funny.

Even the man whose boat I had taken didn't seem to mind. He was a young American, and he went out in a friend's yacht the next day and salved her.

When I was trying to apologize, all he said was:

Sure, don't you worry. You've got your girl and I've got my boat, so what's the big idea? Only see here, never start round the world without seeing what's in the tank! It's not tactics.'

Well, all that was many years ago. The enormous nuisance who calls himself my eldest son is trying to tell me something.

What is it? Oh, you borrowed my brassie, did you? And you've split the shaft? I see. What's that? Why didn't I keep the thing properly oiled? I wonder whether it would interest you to know that, at the present moment, I am working? Thank you. And close the door quietly behind you!

There was a time when I would have called that lad a Nordic Blonde. I was a poet, then. Now I call him a tough egg.

# THE TWO LOST CASES

## FREDERICK SLEATH

The swell was bad when the Captain went ashore, but his orders were uncompromising. 'Get that whisky out of the ship before I come aboard again, if she's rolling her rails under!' So the lighters were kept alongside when they should have been sent away, and the unloading of the cases proceeded.

The swell came in from the sea in long, sleepy ridges that steepened over the bar and raced into La Correga bay with a curl that no ship could meet with any appearance of dignity. It was the very same swell that sank the battered plateships as they lay at anchor after escaping from Cavendish or some other sixteenth-century English rover and foundered the Spanish battleship in the days of Cochrane and the wars of independence, as well as many other ships of later days and less renown. The saloons on the waterfront had all a figurehead or two gracing the premises, and nearly every house in the town had some part of a ship in its anatomy. And now it was making those aboard the *Marianna* wonder whether there was any such thing as stability in ships at all.

Mr Jimmy Douglas, the mate, knew his business and had got his weights right when he loaded her in Glasgow, taking particular care about that very important item from past experience of the nature of the port where the first part of the cargo had to be handled. The *Marianna* was in as good a trim as any ship that had put to sea. Yet she was going over till the water came in at her scuppers white and green, and her lower yards darted down like javelins about to spear their target. The lighters bobbed up and down alongside sometimes as high as the rail and higher, sometimes as low as her lowest bilge strakes. Every fifth or sixth roll she went so far over, the men handling the tackles were thrown helter skelter if they did not belay and hold on in good time. But the cases came out of the hold in a steady succession of fours and were dropped in the lighters as skilfully as well-thrown flies.

'Oh good-a man!' the little olive-skinned agent was moved to exclaim after a particularly neat delivery. "Have-a drink-a Mista?'

He took a drink himself direct from the bottle and spirted it out again with a series of disgusting noises. He was as sick as that! But Mr Jimmy Douglas took no notice of him whatever, either of what he was doing or his invitation. It was not his poop, and the little wop could do what he liked with it. But what happened to the cargo was a different matter. A very different matter!

Two miles away Captain Shaunee O'Brien sat comfortably in the draught on the

veranda of the Café of the Captains, drinking iced beer with the other master-mariners, and hoping his blurry *Mister* would somehow make a mess of it.

The swell had seemed a heaven-sent opportunity to Captain Shaunee, who had deliberately slipped out of the way to let it do its worst against his chief officer. Supplies were running short in the new mining camps up in the sierras, and if the thousand cases the *Mariana* carried could be got ashore before another whisky ship put in a handsome extra profit would accrue for the owners as well as the consignees. Captain Shaunee O'Brien looked seaward every second sip or so with a gleam in his beady blue eyes of pleasant anticipation. If the lighters were sent off before the whisky was cleared he would log his mate for disobedience of orders and neglect of owners' interests. If the cargo was lost or damaged in any part the entry would be—gross negligence in the discharge of his duties.

Captain Shaunee O'Brien had made several such entries already, and meant to leave nothing out that would make it difficult for his mate to ship as mate again—which fact Mr. Jimmy had been very much aware of since they left the Tail of the Bank behind. He had carried himself with a really commendable discretion, and had answers ready for all the charges, or thought he had, as well as a counter-charge or two which he meant to levy against the Captain before the first convenient British consular official. But this swell was the devil upsetting in more ways than one. A logging that carried the sting of loss of money to the owners—Scotch owners. With old Captain Taylor, their trusted shore captain, so nicely placed to speak a prejudiced word or two! He carried on with the unloading as the only thing to be done. But every bit of him was on the job, hands, eyes, ears—everything!

He had put the second mate in the hold to look after the slings, and the bos'n there also to look after the second mate, who was not too reliable.

He had good men on the preventers, and himself took the winch, and for once made its spluttering old engine behave as its makers intended, while Maori Bill—the best man in the ship, was out in the working lighter in charge of the receiving end. And thus they hoisted and swung and lowered all day, using the mainyard as derrick, working the unhandy gear with the skill of men who had to do such things when their lives and the lives of all depended. As dusk was coming down the job was nearly done, without a single bottle being broken or so much as the starting of a single nail.

"Last four cases!" hailed the second mate from the hold.

"Can't you let us have 'em, Mister?" another voice added. "Don't you think we've earned 'em?"

The crowd uttered a muffled—Hear, Hear!

But it could not be done, as they very well knew, against the competition of the droughty sierras, not with a month's pay from all hands thrown in. So up the last four cases came like the others, and over the side.

VERY little things are said to alter the destinies of nations, and maybe what happened was due to the above depicted small display of human feeling and emotion—a weakening of the implicit hand and eye co-ordination by the sudden welling up of the crew's latent longings. Maybe it was only a heavier scend of the ship's hull, giving the lighter an extra inch or two of rise. Anyhow the rising gunwale came up beneath and caught the sling before it was half inboard, and though Maori Bill managed to grab hold of two of the cases, the other two slipped from the slackening cordage and slid over the side.

Yes, it was very hard indeed to lose the last two cases in such a simple way and after such an effort. Naturally the crew swore. There was no excuse whatsoever for the little wop agent, who came shrieking down from the poop adjuring his saints to blast and frizzle up all hands.

"You getta no mon'!" he yelled at Mr. Jimmy. From which the crew inferred a backhander was going for someone, but acquitted the mate of participation therein on the evidence of his attitude.

"Swing Bill in!" he ordered. "Gently!"

Maori Bill was brought aboard like the ship's own child.

"Dump that!"

Two words only, spoken quietly and with no particular emphasis. But the wop was promptly whipped out of the ship like a bundle of unwanted old clothes.

"Double grog all round, steward!" said Mr. Jimmy. "That'll do, men!"—and went below.

He was very well pleased with the way things had gone. To get nine hundred and ninety-eight cases out of the ship under such conditions was no small achievement, and the proof he had given to himself of his own particular capacity was not the least satisfying and inspiring aspect of the affair. He felt fit enough to tackle anybody, especially Captain Shaunee O'Brien, who would be taken ashore and faced with the proper authorities if he tried to cast any aspersions on the part he had played. He only wished old Captain Taylor had been there to see him that day! . . . Bessie's father.

*"Hi!" hailed Bill. "My line's astyit!*
*Nobody heard him, nobody cared.*
*Bottle after bottle fell crashing from the salvaged case.*

Old Captain Taylor had proved inveterate on the subject of mates when told he and Bessie intended to get married. Captains were captains, but mates might be anything, and only a full master-mariner should have his daughter's hand, after which statement the old man simply had to welcome Captain Shaunee, who came coasting along at the moment in search of a shore captain relationship. But it was captains in the parlour and the other parties in the kitchen. And when the angry father at last vented his feelings on the matter irritated beyond restraint by his daughter's unfilial firmness and wholly unsuspected sharpness of tongue, naturally a man like Shaunee O'Brien got wrong ideas

STILL seated on the veranda of the Café of the Captains, Captain Shaunee was drinking much harder stuff than refrigerated beer. His latest move had failed. The honours were decidedly Mr Jimmy's.

"Smart fellow that mate of yours!" was the opinion of the other master-mariners.

He would have to wait a little longer before writing the letter he had planned, telling old Captain Taylor of the happy culmination of what he thought they both desired.

The swell was taking off, but he delayed his return. Aboard the *Marianna*, Mr Jimmy came out on deck and set the anchor watch, and having had a look around, retired below.

The ship soon lay on an even keel in a flashing phosphorescent sea. Soft airs stirred in her shrouds, bearing the scents of earth, the languorous odours of vegetation. A moon made the sky more vivid than by day, and a great white peak loomed up above the lofty rise from the shore like a fairy reflection from the greater lands beyond the sierras. The crew gathered by the rail and looked wistfully at the illuminated town. They heard the music from the band in the square, the laughter from the nearest cafés, the clink and tinkle of the bottles and the glasses. Some even thought their ears could catch the luscious flowing of the wine. And they thought of very many things, such simple things as wet and cold and long hard passages, hunger and thirst, and girls—and cases of whisky lying down below, the two lost cases. And finally they thought of Maori Bill.

Maori Bill sat aloof by himself making trinkets for sale and ward Maori music. He was big and strong and insolently friendly, a man to be avoided in any crooked dealing, but a very obliging shipmate if approached in need and in the sacred name of his hero—Mr Jimmy. And Bill could swim. Oh, yes, sirs! It was nothing to him to go down a foul hawse and tell how the cables turned, and how much turn there was to it. Nothing!

Say, Bill," said the oldest, cunningest seaman. "Six fathom oughta be o no account to you? And ain't it up to yuh?

"Your mother was a mermaid who took pay in Madame Annie's," said Maori Bill politely.

"But ain't you goin' t' go and get those cases, you bloomin' sea-ape? It's nothin' to us. But you oughta know Mister Jimmy'll catch it for losin' 'em when the old man comes aboard. And you sittin' there as could go and get 'em, easy as the cook peels onions!"

Bill's garments fell from him in the motion of his rising. "I go!" he said, and tied two ropes about him, one for himself and one for the cargo. And he slid overboard like the human fish he was, and went down.

"Good chap, Bill," said the oldest, cunningest seaman.

"A thundering good chap! The kind o' messmate as was wanted. They'd stand him a pound o' tabacker a man, and a drink all round next time they came from a pay table. And he's hooked it. Say, he's hooked it. That's his wriggle! Up wi' 'em! Up, ma hearties. Two dozen o' the right stuff. The real Mackay! A long pull for a strong pull. Ho, whisky for ma Johnny!"

A dripping case rose out of the sea, a case with one end stove in. A case that dropped bottles as it banged on the side. "Plop! Plop! That dropped still more bottles as they lifted it in. "Clink! Clink! Bottles that broke as they fell on the hard steel deck. But bottles still left, whole bottles inside. They tore it asunder and handed them round. Bottles of whisky after weeks and weeks of abstinence. Good old whisky. Drink it down.

"Hi!" hailed Bill. "My line's adrift!"

Nobody heard him. Nobody cared.

It cannot be printed what words Bill spat up from the sea. He swam to the cable and climbed aboard and lay down as he was by the other anchor. It would have meant murder had he gone down at once amongst them. He knew better than that. He would wait a little while. Then he'd make them pay. Playing a trick like that on him! Yes, he'd make them!

He could hear them carousing from where he lay, though they had shut both fo'c'sle doors and closed the ports to keep the sounds from carrying aft. They were gulping the potent liquor down, eager to feel the comfort of its mellow fires stealing through their hard-bitten bodies. Their talk came up to him through the ventilator in an

excited burble of half-suppressed conversation, grown men behaving like schoolboys when the teacher has left the room enjoying their interlude of stolen bliss with the soft pedal on. The feuds of the voyage were gone and forgotten, the bitter little personal antipathies of shipboard. They were all good fellows down below swearing eternal fealty and friendship.

Dam good fellows, thought the Maori leaving him the sea to drink!

The burble suddenly wavered and resolved itself into individual voices. The starboard door opened and someone came out, scouted about the deck for a time then climbed up the ladder to the break and peered at him.

Say, Bill?

Something was wrong. They had drunk all the whisky and it had not made them drunk. It had only been sufficient to inflame their desire.

Bill?'

Yeh!'

You didn't happen to notice that other case when you were down?' asked the oldest cunningest seaman. The danged fools busted the one you sent up against the side, and we didn't get more than five bottles out o' it. No use leavin' its mate down there is there now?'

You want me to go an' get it?'

Sure we do!'

I go,' said Maori Bill.

The old man nearly tumbled down the ladder with the news. 'Say, boys. He's goin'!' he stuttered. 'Bill's goin'!'

A flood of friendly men came out and swarmed round Bill.

But you use the tackle this time!' he insisted. 'No more cases after this one. Better not bust him on the side.'

The hoist block was still at the yard-arm to take in some stores the Captain was bringing. It was easy to cast off the end and sink it to the bottom with a link or two of chain.

All I says,' said the oldest seaman as Maori Bill went over and down. 'Bill's a very obligin' feller.'

All hands agreed.

The signal came from below to haul, and they surged round the tackle. 'Forgettin' him already,' snapped the veteran. 'Up wi' him first. And mind, he gets the first bottle!' They surged back to Bill's line, and hauled it in. At the end came dripping over the rail. But Bill was not on it! Bill certainly was not on the end!

'Where's Bill?'

The rail was lined with them looking over. No sleek black head appeared above the surface. No sign of Bill at all!

The sheave of the hoist block began to cheep and the line surged violently as though subjected to a heavy pull. They rushed to tally on and haul. The line tautened, and held.

'Haul away!' yelped the veteran. 'He's fast below!'

They hauled, but could not budge it. The line was held by the bottom of the sea. And Bill was down there!

The simple fact of disaster swept into their minds, overwhelming every other notion with the chill of its inexorable conviction. What was holding the line was holding Bill. That grip must be broken, without delay and by any means available! . . . "The winch!" . . . . 'Start it up!" . . . . "Start it up, and pass the line! Bill's drowning!" . . . . They passed the line to the drum, and swung the starting lever.

STILL warm from its daytime use, the engine snorted into action and picked up its power. The drums turned in the slack and applied the strain. The stout manila cracked and whirred. The yard trembled above their heads, and the ship herself canted gently. Then slowly almost imperceptibly, the tension eased and the line began to come in.

Heave, and bust her!' piped the veteran, triumphantly and all hands cheered.

Up through the ambient water rose a glowing phosphorescent mass that broke above the surface in a dripping shower of light and mounted heavenward at the end of the line. It was chock a block at the yard-arm before someone thought of stopping the winch, and they stood and gaped at it—a long shapeless object, a branch of a tree smothered in weed and incrustation, an old ship's timber.

But whatever it might be it was not Bill!

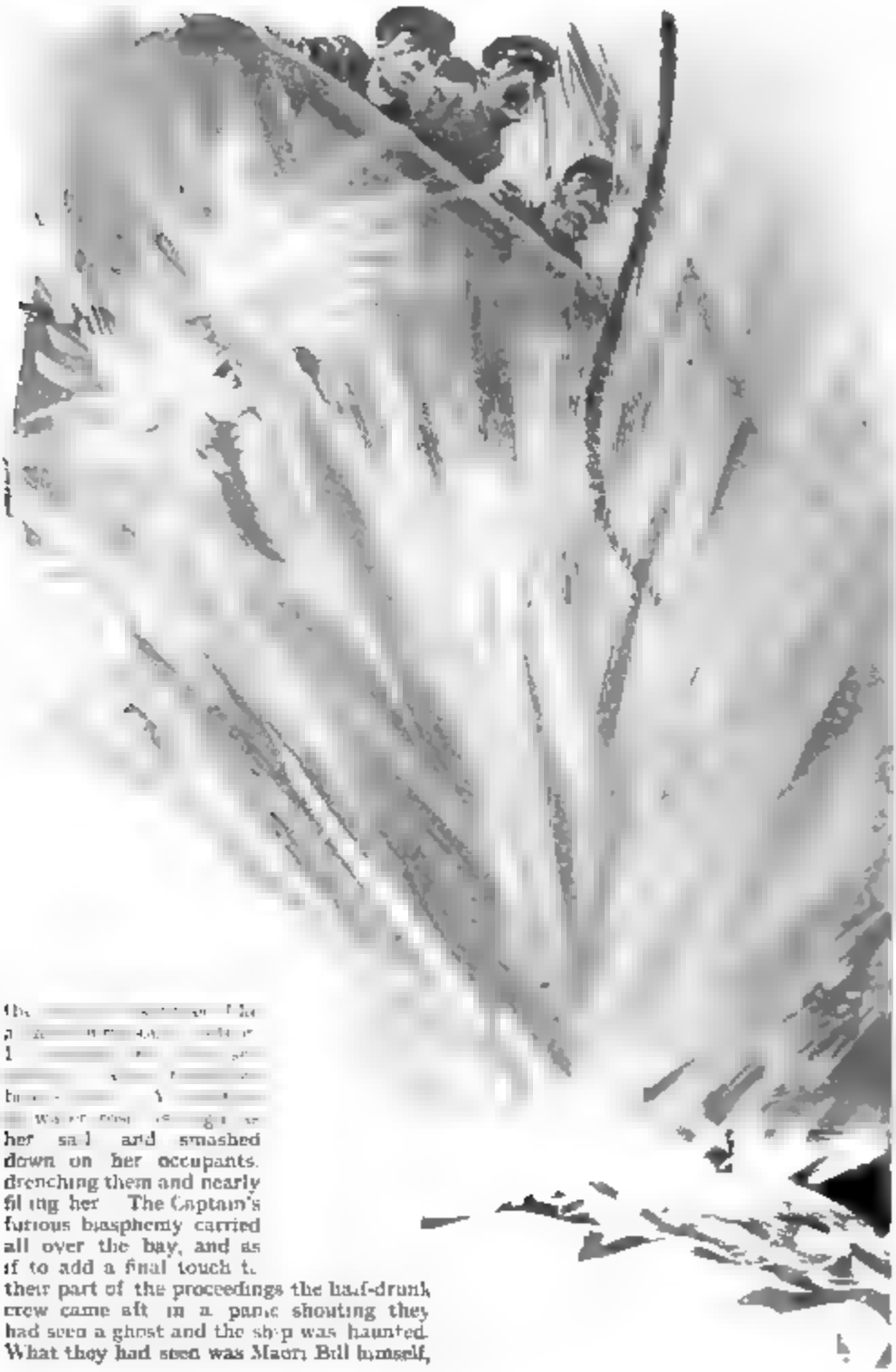
In the waist there?' hailed the mate, roused out of his berth by the din of the engine. "What the dickens are you doing?'

They nearly let the tackle go as they fell back from the rail. . . . "Bill's missing, sir!' someone muttered.

Nobody noticed the white shadow of the shore boat skimming noiselessly towards them before the breeze, nor the man who stood forward of her mast and peered curiously at the ship past the luff of her sail. But they heard his voice as he hailed. "*Marianna* ahoy!" A blast from the trumpet of doom could not have been more effective.

Cristopher! Here's the old man!" gasped the oldest, cunningest seaman, and led the rush forward.

The line ran smoothly through the sheaves.



her sail and smashed down on her occupants, drenching them and nearly filling her. The Captain's furious blasphemy carried all over the bay, and as if to add a final touch to their part of the proceedings the half-drunk crew came aft in a panic shouting they had seen a ghost and the ship was haunted. What they had seen was Maori Bill himself,

who had been some t me in the fo'cs'le watching his dumbfounded mates with the greatest sat.sfaction. . . . . "You rats!" swore Mr Jimmy, with visions of personal disaster and drove them back in the best bucko style of old to discover the truth for themselves.

Captain Shaunee O'Brien came over the ra l with joy flooding his venomous soul He sniffed significantly about among the broken bottles, and took his time to play his cards well. He questioned the mates with unctuous propriety, and such of the men as were able to talk at al. Then he summoned Mr Jimmy into the saloon and del vered his ultimatum Mr. Jimmy could go ashore with his pay and his papers. If he chose to stay by the ship he would be disrated.

*The timber crashed into the sea barely a yard from the boat's side. A fountain of water rose and smashed down on her occupants, drenching them and nearly filling her*

Mr Jimmy quietly packed his chest and went

Captain Shaunee O'Brien whistled cheerfully next morning as the windlass clacked its pawls and the cable came in through the hawse. He had got his rival out of the ship under unbelievably pleasing circumstances A mate who set the hands get drunk on a broached whisky cargo, and who stood on the poop while they tried to murder their captain by dropping a weight into the boat bringing him alongside, such a mate could never, never hope to secure respectable employment in any of the seas where the tale was known And he would spread it at every port and every opportunity! And the silly fool of a man, he exulted, did not seem to see that by leaving the ship he was losing his chance to squash the story The Captain was free to say what he liked both officially and unofficially, without fear of effective denial or contradiction

THE trip to Honolulu whither the *Marianna* was bound to pick up a whale oil cargo was the longest, most tedious passage in her honourable records but easily the most pleasant Captain Shaunee ever enjoyed. It gave him time to paint the case as black as possible in his written report to the owners, and to linger over the scandalous details with which he embellished the letter giving old Captain Taylor the news It did occur to him now and then that Mr Jimmy had gone rather quietly But such a thought was as the shadow of a solitary wisp of cloud drifting across a summer sky at high noon. The blow fell in Honolulu like a bolt from the blue

What's this that mate of yours has been doing in La Correga?" a master-mariner acquaintance hailed him as he walked jauntily away from the quay

Him sneered Captain Shaunee, and began to tell the well-rehearsed tale.

But his friend cut him short It was not that he wanted. The Spanish plateships? What about them? Hadn't he heard? Mr Jimmy had found them! Mr Jimmy was well on the way to becoming a millionaire!

But by bit he gathered in the news, each item and detail like a hammer blow in his brain An obliging ship-chandler was found with a sheaf of press cuttings. He read them through, and stumbled back into the glaring white sunlight like a man walking in an unlit room. It was a dramatic little story. For years a salvage company had searched for the lost galleons, and had been on the point of suspending operations when Mr Jimmy walked in. A fifty per cent share if he showed them the place where they were lying? That was his bargain, duly signed and sealed. And then he had showed them! Six fathom deep beneath the very spot where the *Marianna* had lain! Their grabs had already brought a treasure to the surface. Two hundred thousand pounds worth in ingots and minted gold!

Fifty per cent of two hundred thousand " he muttered stumbling on

" Yes, Captain' said Maori Bill, coming up at his elbow " Mr Jimmy done pretty well I tell him where those old Spanish ships are lying. I see them all there when I go down. I tie the tackle on to a bit of one the second time, and Mr Jimmy asks What's that? when he and me clear the line. I tell him of all those old ship timbers shining down there like ghosts of trees That's why he go ashore!

Then it's your half share ' exclaimed the Captain with a wild hope of still undoing Mr Jimmy ' You found it It's yours!

Mine and his' Maori Bill corrected Fifty fifty! Me and him partners See this cable, Captain! He send for me tell me to come. Send me money You please let me leave the ship, eh? Gimme my discharge? Gimme it Captain—and I give you five pound?

I'll give you hell first! snarled Captain Shaunee, and struck

Maori Bill took the blow on the slant of a withdrawing cheekbone but went down on his back with sufficient ostentation to attract the attention of two policemen, who crossed the road and took the Captain in charge He surrendered to Bill's terms on the threshold of the jail, signed Bill off with a clean discharge and hurried down the quay to the refuge of his saloon Black rage was in his heart chagrin embittered him to the depths of his soul And Maori Bill followed at his elbow talking of Mr Jimmy and the ships they would buy with their money lots and lots of ships, bigger than the *Marianna* But maybe he would speak to Mr Jimmy to let the Captain have a job on one

You ugly dog " roared Captain Shaunee too furious to see Bill's game " I'd have taken the skin off you and your ships, if you hadn't had those policemen so handy!

' No pleecemen here, Captain said Maori Bill pleasantly That's why I come You take my skin, and I take yours.

Police!" yelled the Captain

But the Maori was right and no police were visible And without interference from any other force of law and order, Mr Jimmy's partner administered the very father of all the hidings ever inflicted since the noble and manly art was acquired by man

# THE OPENING BID IN CONTRACT

The difference between an opening bid in Contract and one in Auction is rather like the difference between preparing for a long journey and a short one. Greater foresight is required and a fuller outfit for the long journey. When about to open the bidding in Contract the bidder must be prepared to go farther than in Auction and requires, therefore, a stronger hand. Two Quick Tricks suffice for an opening bid in Auction. This is not enough in Contract, where experience has shown that two and a half should be the normal minimum. In Auction, where one only bids up when forced to by opponents, hands are valued for the opening bid largely on strength in playing tricks. By playing tricks is meant the total of tricks made by small cards as well as by high cards. In Contract the first consideration is the strength of the hand in high cards (*i.e.*, Quick Tricks) and the next consideration is the total strength in playing tricks. Quick Tricks ensure control of the play of the hand and establish winning tricks with small cards. The average total of Quick Tricks is eight, and these control the play of the whole thirteen tricks. This means that each Quick Trick controls about one and a half playing tricks.

In proportion as Quick Tricks increase, the control of play is stronger, so that when one side has (say) six Quick Tricks, it will collect distinctly more than nine playing tricks, and, on the other hand, when it has only two Quick Tricks, it can make no more than these two tricks.

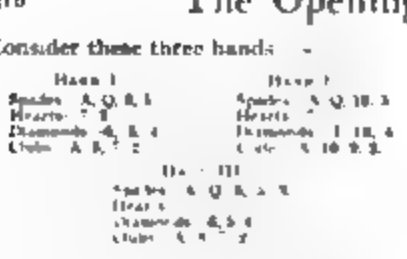
Having now seen the connexion between Quick Tricks (or high-card tricks) and playing tricks, the reader will realize why a hand is always valued in Quick Tricks *for an original bid*. The additional playing tricks are automatically included. Quick Tricks are not, however, the only consideration, though the paramount one.

### The Bid of 'One' in a Suit

In ninety per cent. of deals the opening bid is a bid of "one" in a suit. The essentials for this bid are: (1) two and a half Quick Tricks; (2) a biddable suit, and (3) a due proportion of cards of intermediate value, or if these are absent the biddable suit should be longer.

COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE

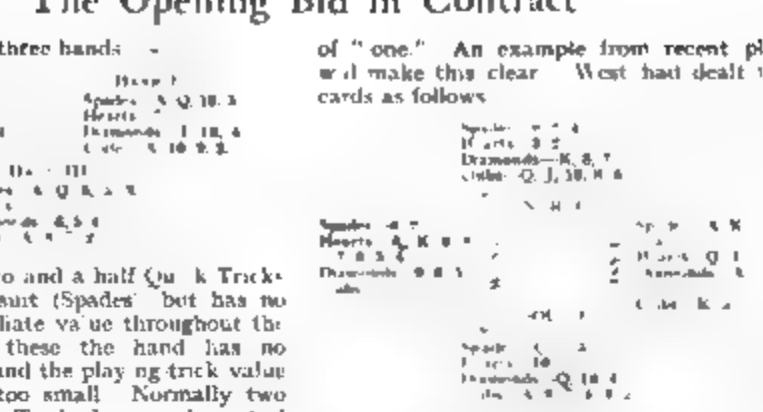
Consider these three hands —



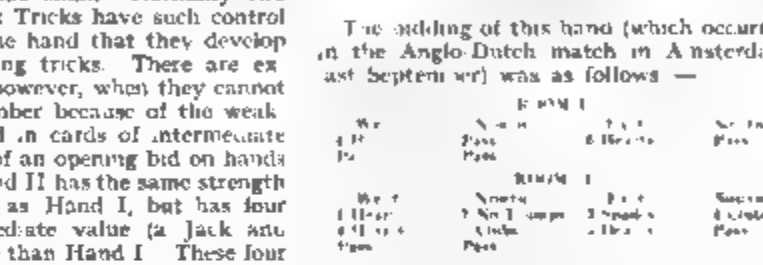
Hand I has two and a half Quick Tricks and a biddable suit (Spades) but has no cards of intermediate value throughout the hand. Without these the hand has no stopping power, and the playing-trick value of the hand is too small. Normally two and a half Quick Tricks have such control in the play of the hand that they develop about four playing tricks. There are exceptional cases, however, when they cannot produce this number because of the weakness of the hand in cards of intermediate value. Beware of an opening bid on hands of this sort. Hand II has the same strength in Quick Tricks as Hand I, but has four cards of intermediate value (a Jack and three Tens) more than Hand I. These four cards make a great deal of difference to both the attacking and defending power of the hand. A sound bid of One Spade can be made on this hand. Hand III has a biddable five-card suit, and consequently possesses greater strength in playing tricks in the suit than Hands I or II which have only a four-card suit. This additional playing-trick strength in the suit, due to its length, offsets the shortage of cards of intermediate value, and justifies a bid of One Spade on the hand. As a suit is assumed to be cleared after the third round the fourth and fifth cards are worth a trick each, so that the suit of Spades in Hand III is alone worth three and a half playing tricks—two for the fourth and fifth cards and one and a half for the Ace Queen. The hand is not very attractive owing to its weakness in cards of intermediate value but it is too good to pass because of its strength in playing tricks.

### The Choice Between a High and Low Opening Bid

Now that the reader has a clear idea of the minimum strength and the type of hand on which a bid of "one" in a suit is made he will naturally next want to know when to make a bid of more than "one." There is in Contract a bid of "two" in a suit which shows great strength and which will be discussed in a later article. There are also bids of "three" or more in a suit. These bids of "three" or more show great distributional strength but may not show any more high-card strength than the bid of "one." An example from recent play will make this clear. West had dealt the cards as follows —



The bidding of this hand (which occurred in the Anglo-Dutch match in Amsterdam last September) was as follows —



The Queen of Clubs was led and a Grand Slam was easily made without taking the finesse in Spades, but ruffing the third round. East and West were vulnerable but North and South were not vulnerable, and could take liberties with the bidding, as they actually did in Room II.

It will be noticed that West in both rooms decided on opening the bidding. There are only two Quick Tricks in his hand but there is such great strength in playing tricks that the bidder can afford to "shade" the normal minimum Quick-Tricks strength for an opening bid. It is an exceptional case. Discretion should be used in such cases, provided always that the high-card strength of the hand is never shaded below two Quick Tricks. Having decided to open the bidding on his hand, West has next to decide whether it is better to bid "one" only or to make a pre-emptive bid of "three" or more. In making a pre-emptive opening bid (i.e., an unnecessarily high bid to shut out a bid from an opponent) the bidder is allowed to count upon the partner for two tricks. A bid of "three" can be made on seven playing tricks, as these with two from the partner make up the nine required for a contract of three. West in Room I considered he had eight playing tricks and bid "four." In Room II he elected to open with a bid of "one." Note the result. North not being vulnerable intervened with a psychic bid of One No Trump. It was psychic because he had no guard in Hearts and the hand was too weak for the bid. Then followed other bids by

both North and South. In the end East and West were jockeyed out of a Slam bid. A Slam was made in both rooms but only bid in Room I. The pre-emptive opening bid in Room I shut out adverse bids and paths.

By a study of this example the reader will be enabled to decide for himself when a pre-emptive bid is better than a bid of one. He will also observe that expert players use either bid in a particular situation.

### The Bid of One No Trump

The reader having grasped the method of valuing his hand for a bid of "one" in a suit will next be confronted with another problem when he has a hand which is strong enough for a bid of "one" but contains no biddable suit. He is then forced to bid One No Trump. Consider the following hands —

Hand IV

Spades—K, 10, 8, 3
Hearts—Q, J, 7
Diamonds—A, Q, 9
Clubs—10, 8

Hand V

Spades—K, J, 10, 3
Hearts—8, 4
Diamonds—A, Q, 10
Clubs—J, 10, 9, 2

Hand VI.

Spades—K, J, 10, 3
Hearts—J
Diamonds—A, Q, 8
Clubs—J, 10, 9, 2

On Hand IV there is only one bid possible, viz. One No Trump. It has a 4-3-3-3 distribution, which is devoid of ruffing values for a suit declaration, and it has three suits guarded and some lesser honours in the fourth suit. All these considerations point to a bid of One No Trump, this being the only bid which gives the partner a true picture of the hand. The distributions which are best for a No Trump contract and worst for a suit contract are the 4-3-3-3, the 4-4-3-2, and the 5-3-3-2 distributions. On Hand V the distribution is also a No Trump distribution (4-4-3-2) because of the poor ruffing values in the hand. There is, however, one danger here with a bid of One No Trump, there is a weak doubleton in the hand. By a "weak doubleton" is meant less than J x. With less than J x in any suit a bid of One No Trump should if possible be avoided. The alternative bid here is a "shaded" bid of One Spade. The normal minimum strength in the suit for a bid of One Spade is here K, Q, 10, x, but it is better to make a shaded bid of One Spade on K, J, 10, 9 rather than risk a bid of One No Trump on a hand with a weak doubleton. As a general rule a shaded bid in a suit should always be made in preference to a bid in No Trumps. On Hand VI there is no bid, even a reasonably shaded bid, possible in a suit. Bid One No Trump on this hand, observing that the unstopped suit is at least as strong as J x.

### A Well Played Hand

The following is an instructive example of correct play of a hand. The cards had been dealt by East as follows:—

EAST

Spades—8
Hearts—A, 10, 6
Diamonds—K, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3.
Clubs—K, 5, 3.

NORTH

Spades—K, Q, J, 10, 9, 2.
Hearts—9, 8, 7.
Diamonds—Q, 9, 2.
Clubs—7, 6, 4.

WEST

Spades—A, 9, 4, 3.
Hearts—K, J, 5.
Diamonds—A, 8.
Clubs—10, 8, 2.

SOUTH

Spades—7, 6,
Hearts—Q, J, 5, 4, 3, 2,
Diamonds—10,
Clubs—A, 9, 7.

Both sides were vulnerable, and the bidding was as follows:—

| East | South | West | North |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Diamond | 2 Hearts | 3 Spades | 4 Hearts. |
| Pass | Pass | 4 Spades. | Pass |
| Pass | 5 Hearts | Pass. | Pass |
| Double | Pass | Pass | Pass |

West opened with the King of Spades, which was taken over with the Ace by East in order to lead. East was Mr E. C. Goudsmit who is considered one of the finest players on the Continent. This leading expert had now an opportunity to make a lead which would defeat the contract. If the reader will count North's and South's tricks he will see that there are nine between the two hands, including one ruff. Two more must be made somehow. How are they to be made? Mr Goudsmit, after taking the first trick, returned the 10 of Clubs. He could not lead away from the King of Diamonds, and considered the best thing to do was to try to set up a trick in Clubs while he had the Ace of Hearts as a card of re-entry. There is a good deal to be said for the lead of a Club here. South got his chance after this lead and made the best of it. He squeezed the extra tricks by ruffing out the Diamonds until two long winning ones were established. The declarer had just enough cards of re-entry in Dummy for this by playing the Ace of Clubs from his own hand and starting straight away to clear the Diamonds. If the reader plays the hand out he will see that after East's lead of a Club there are just sufficient cards of re-entry in the dummy for the declarer to ruff out the Diamonds and squeeze the extra tricks. One of these essential cards of re-entry could have been killed by East had he led out the Ace and another trump, or returned a Spade and forced the Dummy to ruff. The latter would then not have had sufficient cards of re-entry to establish the long Diamonds. Even experts take a wrong view occasionally on the best defensive play and here it was very difficult to see that all depended on killing one card of re-entry into dummy.

# THE LAST

BRUCE

( ) blue and gold September morning, when Deibler was not, Monsieur de Paris, the French executioner called his son to his bedside and said:—

"My son, I am ill. I am so badly that I shall not be able to cut off the head of Auguste Renu on Friday morning at Nancy."

"Yes, my father," said André Flotte, son of Achille Flotte, the great executioner who in thirty years had cut off two hundred and twenty-six heads. "Yes, my father," said André Flotte, and thought how soon he must succeed his father and become a great executioner and marry Mathilde and have a little André who would, of course, be called Achille, and grow up to become a great executioner. "Yes, my father," said André Flotte.

"Then listen to me," said the great executioner. "I am an old man and it is probable that I shall die one of these four mornings. What more natural than that you should succeed me?"

"What more natural?" said André Flotte, and then said the remark which he ought to have said first. "But of course you will not die, my father; of course you will not die!"

"My son," said the great executioner, "I will be frank with you. For ten years you have assisted me, and during that time you have seen seventy-three heads fall. And they all fell neatly. They all fell neatly."

"Yes, they all fell neatly," said André Flotte.

"My son, you have two great faults which, unless you are careful, will prevent your becoming a great executioner. One of them you can help, the other you can't help. Let us speak first of the fault which you can help."

"Yes, let us speak first of the fault which I can help."

"You are careless, you are careless. You do not realize that cutting off heads is an art. Yes, a great art. You are too inclined to look upon it as a mere profession like lawyering or stockbroking. Stay, I will give you an instance. At Rouen two months ago you would have forgotten to cut the collar off the prisoner's shirt and shave the back of his head if I had not been there to remind you. That is the sort of mistake that a stockbroker would make, my son, a stockbroker who does not care if the contract note is stamped upside down so long as he gets the money. But it is not the sort of mistake which an executioner should make. And stay again, my son. The month before at Lille you would have forgotten to test the fall of the knife unless I had been there to do it for you. That is more grave."

"Yes, that is more grave."

"My son," said the old man, touched by the shame that was apparent on his son's face, "my son, I tell you these things only because I am very, very anxious that you should become a very, very great executioner. I have ambitions for you, my son. I do want you to become a really great executioner. I want, a hundred years hence, two hundred years hence, a thousand years hence, yes, a thousand years hence, I want people to shrug their shoulders and say: 'Yes, he has skill, but it is not the skill of André Flotte. André Flotte! Ah, there was an executioner for you.'" The old man looked shrewdly at his son. "If you can correct the faults which you can help then the fault which you can't help will be turned to your glory and honour."

"The fault which I can't help?"

"Yes, my son, the fault which you can't help. The fault which you cannot help, I say, because it is certainly not your fault

# HALF HOUR

that you have lost your right leg. But the authorities do not see things that way. Oh, I know that they are stupid these ones, and that they do not understand that a man does not require to have two legs in order to press the button which releases the knife. I know that, my son, but unfortunately it is those imbeciles the authorities who appoint executioners. And only last week I heard the Minister of the Interior say to the Minister of Agriculture: 'Yes, the father's all right, but the son's got a wooden leg.' Of course, it may not have been about us that they were talking, but on the other hand it may. And in any case it is well to be forearmed." The old man again looked shrewdly at his son.

Unless, of course, you want to take up another profession.

But no, my father, I most certainly do not want to take up another profession.

"Listen to me, then. It is almost certain that Auguste Renu's appeal will be rejected. Almost certain, but not quite. It appears that there is a woman in the case, a beautiful blonde, a Mademoiselle Proust, for whom he says that he was stealing the diamonds from the jeweller he murdered. It appears further that they are trying to make a *crime passionnel* out of the case, saying that jealousy was the motive and that Renu murdered Goubet not because Goubet came in and caught him stealing the diamonds, but because he had once seen Goubet knocking on the door of Renée Proust's bathing box at Dinard. But all that you will have read in the papers, my son. Anyway it is certain enough that his appeal will be rejected for you to make preparations to leave to-morrow night. You had better get hold of Marcel and Pierre and tell them to take the *bois de justice* down to the Gare de l'Est. Of course, if the appeal comes off they will have to bring them back again. But I do not think that the appeal will come off. Indeed I pray nightly to the good God to arrange that it won't."

That is kind of you," said André Flotte.

"You see, André," his father went on, "you are not yet official executioner, but I am and, being all I can appoint you, my assistant, to deputize for me. Then when you have proved that, wooden leg or no wooden leg, you can carry out an execution alone and unaided then, my son, you will be certain of being appointed official executioner when I die or retire. Then, André, you will be able to marry Mathilde and live happily ever after."

My father, you are too good to me," said André.

"Nonsense, André. I am wishing only that you may have the success that you deserve. But remember to attend to details, my André. Shave the prisoner and cut his shirt properly, and test the falling of the knife at least twice. And above all don't let people know who you are. Don't talk to people in the train or in the hotel. Remember that an executioner proceeding to and from duty has his dignity to consider and that he must not jeopardize that dignity by conversing with nobodies. And now, my son," he said, holding out a tumbler, "you might pour a little water in that bicarbonate of soda."

(On the Thursday afternoon the President of the Republic decided that not only had Auguste Renu never seen Théophile Goubet knocking on the door of Renée Proust's bathing-box at Dinard, but that he had never known her and that all Auguste's and Renée's assertions to the contrary were merely lies destined to divert justice and defeat retribution. So André had to go to Nancy, and Mathilde came to see him off at the Gare de l'Est.

# MARSHALL

*Illustrated by* ALBERT BAILEY

*"They say that Auguste guillotined to- To his surprise the her knife and fork and*

" I am so proud of you, *mon petit loup*," she said as she stood outside the door of the first-class compartment in which her lover had settled himself. " But no, *mon chou*, but no you can have no idea of how proud I am of you Think, André this time to-morrow, your name will be in all the papers and everybody will know that my Coco cut off the head of that foul murderer at Nancy For you are my Coco, aren't you, *mon petit loup*? "

Leaning out of the window, André Flotte wished simultaneously several wishes. He wished that Mathilde looked a little ess homely and a little more like the exceedingly pretty young woman who was the only other occupant of the compartment, and who was leaning back in her corner and looking into a small mirror and painting scarlet curves on her lips. He wished that Mathilde had not insisted on coming to the station He wished that he had never seen Mathilde. He wished that the train would start before anybody else got into the compartment.

Ssh, ' he said, glad to have the opportunity of rebuking her, " Ssh! Remember what my father said about the necessity for not talking about these things.

You are right. I am sorry Please forgive me,' said Mathilde, and stood in silent contrition until the train started.

It was not until he found himself seated alone with her in the dining-car that André Flotte plucked up the courage to speak to his travelling companion, and then all he said was ' Can I pass you the mustard? '

No, thanks," she said I never take mustard.

She lowered her eyes and appeared as

*Renn is going to be morrow" said Andre young woman laid down looked at him intensely*

though she did not wish to continue the conversation André Flotte however his magnat or stimulated by much reading of popular novels, was determined to do his best to make her acquaintance. But what was it to talk about? He could not very well ask her why she never took mustard. The weather? No, that would be altogether too banal. The coming execution at Nancy? What on earth was the harm, provided he didn't let the cat out of the bag?

"They say that Augusto Renn is going to be guillotined to-morrow."

To his surprise, she laid down her knife and fork and looked at him intensely.

"So they say. I think that it is a great shame."

He shrugged his shoulders and hoped to be able to draw her into an argument.

"But if he is guilty?"

"He is *not* guilty!" Once again her intensity surprised him. He did not murder Théo—he did not murder this Goubet because he wanted to steal his jewels. He murdered him because he thought that Renée Proust was Goubet's mistress.

"You seem to know a lot about it," he said, banteringly.

"I do know a lot about it," she said, frowned, and then made a gesture with her hands and laughed and said: "But why am I getting all worked up like this? You'll be thinking that I'm Renée Proust if I go on much longer."

"Scarcely," he laughed back at her. "Shall I tell you what I do think? I think

it's your woman's heart getting the better of your head."

She nodded, and was grave again.

"Perhaps you're right," she said. "When I think of that poor man and what's going to happen to him to-morrow morning I could weep and scream. The dark cell. The prisoner sleeping. The waking. Be brave, your appeal has been dismissed. The dressing. The priest. The glass of rum. Horrible, oh, it's too horrible to think of," she said. "It's too horrible to think of."

"Then don't think of it."

But how can one help thinking of it? That poor man. He's every bit as human as you or I. He must feel things just as you or I do. And that half-hour to-morrow morning, that half-hour from his waking to his death, monsieur, that half-hour will be terrible." She sighed and then smiled across her sighing. "But perhaps I lament too soon. There is yet time for the President to pardon him. He may yet escape the scaffold."

"He will not escape the scaffold, madame. The President will not pardon him. He will be guillotined to-morrow at dawn. Nothing can save him." The words came so quickly and produced such an effect that he added before he knew that he intended to add it, "I know, madame, I am the executioner."

For a moment he thought that she was going to faint, so white did she turn, and so hardly did she clasp the edges of the small table which separated them.

"You, the executioner. But it is not possible. Monsieur de Paris is an old man."

"I am the son of Monsieur de Paris. My father is ill and has delegated me to carry out this execution for him. He was so full of pride that he meant only rhetorically the question which he tacked on to his statement. Perhaps madame would now prefer that I change to another table?"

"But no, monsieur." The young woman changed her expression hurriedly and smiled a smile which banished even the memory of her former concern. "But no, monsieur. You are only doing your duty. You will excuse my momentary emotion, will you not? You see, I had no idea that I was travelling with the great."

André Flotte, flattered by her interest, drank deeply of the red wine in his glass.

"So now you understand why it is that I say with authority that nothing can save Auguste Renu from the gallows to-morrow morning. Nothing, madame, nothing. To-morrow at five-twenty-five he will be wakened and I shall shave the back of his neck and cut the top off his shirt. To-morrow at five-fifty-five he will be dead. I have only to do what my father tells me."

"It is your father then who has taught you how to be an executioner?"

"Yes, it is my father who has taught me. And do you know, the old one thinks that I will botch the broth. No, he has not much confidence in me, the old one. You see, I have a wooden leg, and the old one thinks that the imbeciles in authority will be prejudiced against me on that account when it comes to appointing his successor. But even he admits that if I bring off this execution successfully they can have nothing to say against me. Well, he need not fear, the old one. Wooden leg or no wooden leg, to-morrow at five-fifty-five I shall press the button and the knife shall come down and the head of Auguste Renu shall fall. Nothing can prevent that. Nothing."

"No, nothing can prevent that," she said so tonelessly that he began to be afraid lest he had offended her.

"Ah well," he said, "but surely it is not of wooden legs and falling heads that one should be talking with a woman so charming as yourself." He looked yearningly at her and wished that he might touch her hand. "You do not despise me for being an executioner?"

Surprisingly it was she who touched his hand, momentarily, deliciously.

"On the contrary," she said, "I think that you are wonderful. And after a hesitation as delightful as her caress, she asked, "And where are you staying in Nancy, monsieur?"

"At the Hôtel des Deux Hemisphères," he said. "And you?"

"Also at the Hôtel des Deux Hemisphères," she said, and added with a meaning smile. "Perhaps then we shall see more of each other."

THEY did see more of each other, and that night just as he was about to turn over for four hours' sleep the door of André Flotte's room opened and a figure in white slid into the darkness.

"I had to come," she said. "No, do not get up, and do not put on the light. What I have to say will be said much better in the dark. I am going to sit on this chair by the side of your bed and talk to you, and you are going to listen, yes, like a little boy you're going to listen."

"I am listening," said André Flotte and wished that he might hold her hands in his and kiss the fragrance of her hair.

"No," she said as though reading his thought, "you must not touch me until you have heard what I have got to say, and then you may kiss me once before I go. André Flotte, I love you. I fell in love with you as soon as I saw you, and all the time that we were travelling together I was wanting you

*"I had to come," she said. "No, do not get up, and do not put on the light. What I have to say will be said much better in the dark."*

to speak to me and make love to me. It does not matter to me that you are an executioner, or that you have a wooden leg. It matters to me only that you are you, and that you have the most adorable eyes that I have ever seen. André Flotte, after the execution, will you please not go away immediately. Will you stay with me for one whole day and give me the opportunity to know you better?

My wonder woman," said André Flotte, forgetting his father and Mathilde and his promises to both, "my wonder woman I will stay with you for three whole days.

Oh, you dear," she said. Now close your eyes for I am going to kiss you a very wonderful kiss. Close them and keep them closed until I have left the room. Promise? If you don't promise I shall not kiss you. If you do promise I shall both kiss you and allow you to keep them open to-morrow night.

I promise," said André Flotte, and closed his eyes and received a kiss so devastating that he found it difficult to open them again even when he heard the door close softly behind her.

FOR the rest of that night he found it difficult to sleep. He thought of Mathilde and of how homely she was, and of how her hair was done at the back in a bun, of how it irritated him when she kept calling him her *petit loup*. How different his new companion, how enchanting, how they would enjoy themselves to-morrow when this head of Auguste Renu had fallen and they were free to wander where they would.

He slept then fitfully, dreaming always of his new friend and awaking to find that she was not with him. Then he dreamt that he and she were being married at St. Honoré d'Eylau and that Mathilde was a bridesmaid and that her bun looked more ridiculous than ever. Then the alarm by the side of his bed rang loudly. It was four o'clock. He would have to get up.

In an instant he was the executioner, the grim official of the law who has to perform a duty he does not like to a person who dislikes it even more. Of course, he thought, as balancing himself on one leg he began to shave himself in front of the looking-glass, of course, the fellow didn't really feel anything. It was too quick for that. Still, the being awakened must be pretty unpleasant. "Be brave, your appeal has been rejected." And the next half-hour must be simply terrible. Not that that was anybody's fault except the prisoner's. If people *would* commit murders.

Ah, well, nothing could save the poor devil now. Marcel and Pierre, in their less pretentious hotels, would be getting up, too. In half an hour he would be meeting them at the gate of the prison and they would begin erecting the guillotine. He must not forget to test the fall of the knife at least twice. The old one had said that that was very important. He must forget nothing.

Ah, well, he must be dressing. Off with his nightdress and on with his shirt. One, two, three. One, two, three. Smartly like a soldier. And now there was his wooden leg to put on. He had propped it against the corner of the wardrobe. No, he hadn't. He must have slid it under the bed. No, he hadn't. He must have stuck it against the wash-hand-stand. No, nor there either. Against the fireplace, then. No, nor there either.

But what was that note upon the mantelpiece? A message from her? An extra word of love? So that was why she had asked him to keep his eyes closed until she had left the room? He forgot about his leg as he hopped to pick up and unfold the doubled sheet of paper. He thought only of his wonder woman and of how he was going to spend three whole days with her. He thought, and, still thinking, read.

The soup that is in the spoon does not always reach the mouth. Above all, do not forget to say that it was Renée Proust that stole your leg."

For a full minute he stood, too overwhelmed to speak or to act. Then he rushed to the telephone and shouted into the receiver.

Get me the manager. What, still in bed? Get him to get up. There has been a burglary, I tell you. Yes, a robbery. Room five hundred and three. Yes, immediately.

It was half-past four by the time that the manager arrived and found André Flotte one-legged, and in his dressing-gown, sitting miserably on the edge of the bed.

Monsieur says that there has been a roobery?" he asked, glancing quickly round the room. "Would monsieur mind telling me what has been stolen?

My artificial leg," said André Flotte, and shouted as he saw the difficulty with which the other realized [illegible]. Yes, I know it sounds rough, but perhaps you will laugh less when I tell you that that artificial leg was of national importance. Of national importance, Monsieur the Manager, and it has been stolen in your hotel. Perhaps you are unaware that I am the executioner who is to cut off Auguste Renu's head at five-fifty-five this morning."

"Ah, to be sure," said the manager, "to be sure. Monsieur must excuse me for having forgotten. We get so many celebrities, you see."

Celebrities be damned," said André Flotte. "My artificial leg has been stolen.

It is now half-past four and already ought to be superintending the erection of the guillotine. In fifty-five minutes the prisoner [illegible] about it.

I tell you that my [illegible] your hotel in Lübeck.

Monsieur has not proved to me that his leg has been stolen. His leg may be merely mislaid. Monsieur may have put his leg under the bed and magined that he [illegible]

*"Good morning, Monsieur the Executioner. I am his advocate for the defence. I shall never be able to thank you sufficiently for the service you have done to the cause of justice."*

I tell you that the leg has been stolen! But even as he uttered the words, André Flotte realized that he could not tell the other *how* he knew that it had been stolen and that he could not recount to a mere hotel manager the humiliating story of Renée Proust, so he quickly changed his tone and said with quiet dignity:—

'Monsieur, I shall be infinitely grateful if you would send somebody to rouse the leading crutchmaker in the town and to demand of him an assortment of all sizes of his wares. In the meantime, I shall telephone to the authorities at the prison and ask them to postpone the execution until I have found a pair of crutches on which to perform it.'

'I shall go myself, monsieur,' said the manager, willing to oblige and aid his guest now that the latter had ceased to bluster. 'There is a very good crutchmaker a quarter of an hour from the hotel, and I think that he sleeps above his shop. With good luck I should be back in forty minutes. Monsieur will excuse me? I can see that there is no time to be lost.'

Forty minutes. Fifteen minutes to get to the prison. He'd just be in time for the awakening of the prisoner. Ah, well, Marcel and Pierre would have to erect the guillotine and test the falling of the knife themselves. He couldn't see about getting himself a pair of crutches and test the falling of the knife at the same time. And crutches he must have, if the head of Auguste Renu were going to fall at five-fifty-five.

He rushed to the telephone. 'Give me the exchange,' he shouted to the hotel operator, and to the exchange girl he was even more peremptory. 'Give me the prison. No, I don't know the number. But give me the prison. It's a matter of death or life,' he yelled, and was too angry, impatient, and excited to be amused by anyone's failure to notice his inversion.

'Yes? That the prison? Give me the Governor. Tell him it's the executioner speaking. Hello, that Monsieur the Governor? Good morning, Monsieur the Governor. André Flotte speaking. Very well, and yourself. Look here, Monsieur the Governor, I've just had my artificial leg stolen. Yes, stolen. And by Renée Proust. She left a note to say that it was she. Yes, must have come into my room while I was sleeping. What? No, I never lock my door. But this isn't the point. The point is this. The hotel manager's gone out to get me a pair of crutches. Crutches. C-R-U-T-C-H-E-S. It's four-thirty-five now, but I'll do my best to be there in time for the wakening of the prisoner. If not, wait for five minutes. And if I'm not there then, wake the prisoner and let Marcel and Pierre prepare him. I'll be there to execute him. You can count on me for that. If I've got to hop all the way on one leg, I'll be there to execute him. And tell Marcel and Pierre to get on with the erection of the guillotine, and tell them to be sure to test the falling of the knife. Thank you, Monsieur the Governor. *A tout à l'heure*, Monsieur the Governor.'

AT a quarter past four the hotel manager returned with ten pairs of crutches, and at twenty past four André Flotte, clasping the pair that fitted him best, was bowling along towards the prison in a taxi. As elated as he had recently been depressed, he was telling himself that he was glad that Renée Proust had stolen his artificial leg.

For, if it was an achievement to cut off a murderer's head when you were wearing an artificial leg, surely it was a far greater achievement to cut off that murderer's head when you had had your wooden leg stolen by his mistress, and had had only an hour and a-half's notice before dawn in a strange town in which to supply yourself with crutches. Surely that was an achievement.

Of course, the papers would get hold of it. He would be a hero. His father would be proud of him. There might even be a deputation at the Gare de l'Est to meet him, an Under-Secretary and palms, and a band.

Perhaps, though, he oughtn't to have said that it was Renée Proust who had stolen his leg. Of course nobody would know that he had been awake when she came into his room, and nobody would know that she had cajoled him with the promise of a kiss into closing his eyes. Nobody *could* know that. But people must have seen them dining together in the hotel last night, and the manager could be trusted to connect a woman guest who suddenly disappeared with Renée Proust who had stolen André Flotte's artificial leg. Yes, but that would just prove Renée Proust's cunning in making up to him. As long as it didn't prove his own cunning in making up to Renée Proust. Oh, well, he could always say that she had come to him with some tale about being a widow in distress. And it was good publicity anyway, and if Mathilde didn't like it she could go and eat tadpoles. The fame that he was going to acquire would more than compensate for any displeasure which Mathilde might manifest.

Ah, now they were in front of the prison. What a crowd! He was going to have an audience all right. Of course, they didn't know yet about his artificial leg having been stolen. If they did, they would be cheering

Ah, well, they would cheer later when they read their midday newspapers, they and the rest of France, yes, they would cheer silently perhaps, but in such a way as to make him, André Flotte, famous for the rest of his life.

I am the executioner he said to the policeman who came running forward to help him out of the taxi. Have they wakened the prisoner yet?" He glanced up at the guillotine with its triangular shaped knife high in the air. "I see that the boys have been managing without me all right

This way, said the policeman conducting him through a small door into the prison They haven't wakened him yet They are waiting for you.

They were waiting for him were they Well he would make it worth their while to have waited. Never should a head have been cut off more neatly

Here he is," said a man, turning and detaching himself from the dark official looking group waiting inside the prison door "Good morning, Monsieur the Executioner I am Maître Proust advocate for the defence. I for one shall never be able to thank you sufficiently for the service you have inadvertently done to the cause of justice

"I don't know so much about the inadvertently" said André Flotte It is true that I did not trouble myself to inquire of these crutches, but it was I who told the hotel manager to get them Well, gentlemen, he said, wondering at and not altogether liking the smiles on the faces which were turned towards him, "well, gentlemen, is it not time to be thinking about wakening the prisoner?

Monsieur the Executioner said the man who had introduced himself as the advocate for the defence, we are not going to waken the prisoner If you will be good enough to listen to me. I will tell you why As soon as I was informed that it was Renee Proust who had stolen your artificial leg, I put through an urgent call to the President of the Republic at Rambouillet and pointed out to that eminent gentleman none the less considerate for being in his pyjamas that Renée Proust would scarcely trouble to steal the executioner's artificial leg for a man she did not care for and that as it was well established that she had been seen about with Goubet, everything pointed to a *crime passionel* The President was pleased to agree with my view, and has ordered that the execution be suspended while he reconsiders the case. And, Monsieur the Executioner, as one never erects the *bois de justice* twice for the same criminal I think that we can consider that the life of Auguste Renu is as good as saved. And I am sure Monsieur the Executioner that, as a humane man you will rejoice as sincerely as the rest of us here.

# ACROSTICS

DR. BRUCE MARSHALL'S No. 240

Just a creature we find,
Of a curious kind,
Whose quills for protection are well designed
When we go to the Zoo,
And we wander all through,
And look for a beast with a hump or two

1. Nature has spotted it and we
Can spot the creature easily
2. A useful shellfish, very good,
Except in certain months, as for
3. A bulbous tuberous chuck a hind
Half of a lengthy name provide
4. A shellfish proclamations show
Quite clearly a vow want to know
5. Deer lacking head and tail, a name
A bird for Christmas chosen once
6. Hard at the last the fish here seen
Is not unlike a log sawdust
7. An Eastern land where deer abound
And elephants are also found
8. A boy a boat one of a pair
With crabs or lobsters have a care
9. A garment, island, kind of cow
It lacks its trading letter now

AN

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. [illegible]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| [illegible] | | a | s |
| | | a n | A |
| [illegible] | o v e r s e | | E |
| [illegible] | | s t | S |
| [illegible] | a b e | | A |
| [illegible] | s a u c e | | R |

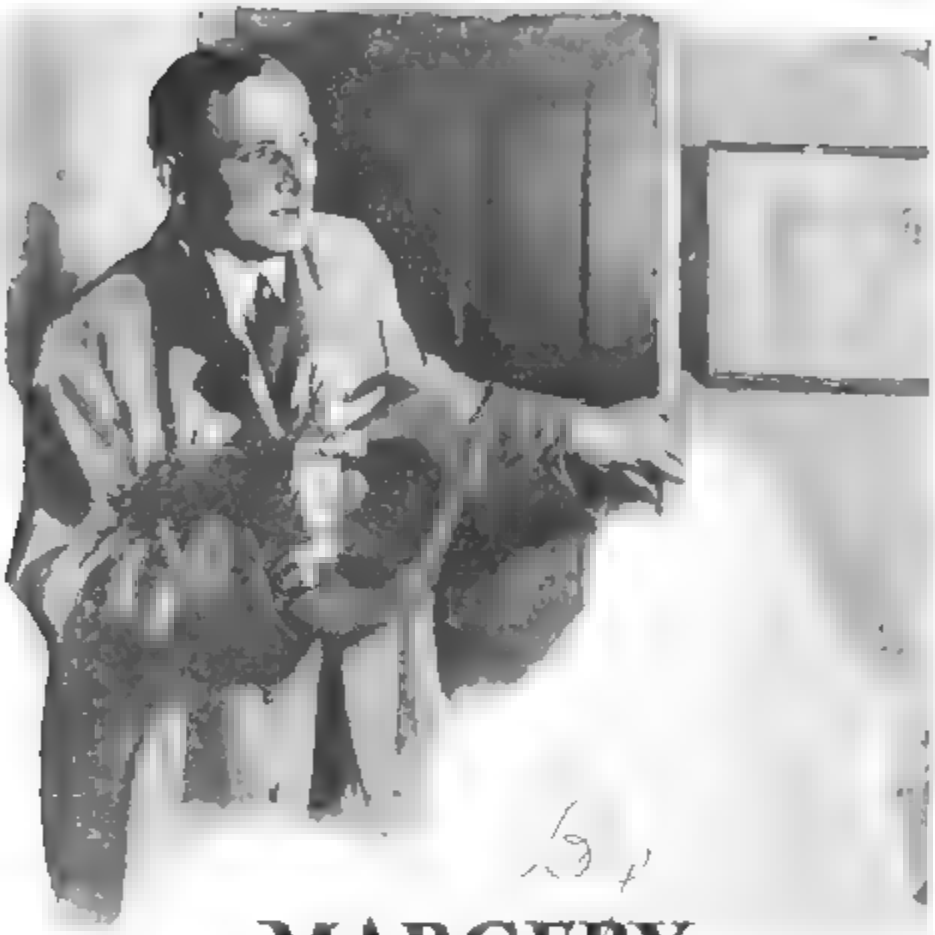
NOTE.—Light s. jacobite

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 39.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| [illegible] | E | [illegible] g | N |
| | A | n b | b |
| | K | o c k | A |
| 4. | N | a k e | R |
| 5. | B | d i | E |
| 6. | S | o l e | S |
| 7. | [illegible] | a c | [illegible] |

No ax. s prights and lights, anagrams ab logic datum, aroc auker crude locks, satic.

# THE LADY



## MARGERY SHARP

THERE should, of course, be four," said Mr McEwen sadly, and from either side of the counter he and Sherrard looked gravely down upon the three ladies.

They stood perhaps five and a half inches high, their porcelain cheeks bright as apples, their porcelain petticoats gay with the strong reds and blues of old Bow, and were so gracefully posed in attitudes of such delicate dignity that one knew them immediately for ladies of quality.

"A very rare set," sighed Mr McEwen, pushing them gently out into a row. "The best couple, thus placed, appeared to be in the act of exchanging a pair of gilded doves; the third, her charming head inclined towards no one at all, pathetically

# OF QUALITY

*With a swift, defensive movement, she rose to her feet, and he saw that she was very tall and slim and dark*

*Illustrated by*
*ELIZABETH*
*BARNSHAW*

extended a cluster of roses while from her slender pinkish-mauve waist drooped the final agonomy of a ticket with the price Mr McEwen fingered it thoughtfully

Now it was one of Sherrard's principles never to acquire (except of course by legacy from aunts or other hazard) an odd cup an odd vase, even an odd group. He liked pairs, sets, the satisfying completeness of his Sèvres coffee-service and was therefore on the point of regretful but firm departure when all at once an entirely ridiculous notion took possession of him. It was quite simply that if he bought these three figures and trusted to chance, the fourth would sooner or later be certain to turn up

For such an attitude there was neither explanation nor excuse To the legal mind of a successful barrister it should have been virtually impossible Nor was that all besides being a barrister Sherrard was also something of an expert, specializing in china dabbling in prints, and with a deep (though never gratified) feeling for tapestry He therefore knew as well as Mr McEwen that three odd figures of old Bow meant more often than not, that the fourth had been broken some time in the eighteenth century and that even if intact the odds against finding it would run into astronomical figures.

But in this one case—in favour of these three particular ladies—it seemed as though all the rules of logic were relaxed The purchase seemed positively reasonable, and in a state of complete demoralisation Sherrard paid exactly what he was asked

The dealer set down sharply Mr McEwen, concealing his surprise, would take you into museum prices. . ."

But Sherrard made no answer, being already engaged in hailing a taxi to take him back to his vast old-fashioned chambers behind Queen Anne's Gate, where he lived in that state of intricate disorder achieved only by wealthy bachelors with first-class cooks. He was only thirty-five, but from the state of the living-rooms one might have imagined him bed-ridden a charwoman to be sure, came in every morning, and on Fridays stayed until three, but she had been early corrupted by the discovery that no one seemed able to tell whether she had spent the time in cleaning out the dining-room or in reading the day's news. Mrs Magenn's stuck to her kitchen, the master to his study between which poles of order and chaos the rest of the apartments formed a borderland of unobtrusive neglect Sherrard himself could hardly have described them except of course for the great glass-fronted cupboards that lined each wall and within which, after two or three days lingering inspection, each new purchase eventually found a place

In this particular instance however the procedure was varied. At the end of their two days' probation Sherrard took his three figures into the study and cleared them a place on the mantel

THE calendar definition of 'sooner or later' has never been made During the next eighteen months or so Sherrard had rather more work than usual, bought one or two pieces of Chelsea and by way of summer holiday sailed a boat to Spain and back But amidst all these absorbing occupations he never entirely forgot that he was looking for a lady

Or a needle in a haystack

He had, indeed, certain qualifications A china figure, especially if about the right size, caught his eye from the other side of the road, so that there were certain thoroughfares down which he habitually progressed in a series of zig-zags He took note of every pawnbroker, never passing on without a swift glance along the shelves, and the stalls of the Caledonian Market could have told him what he wanted before he opened his mouth. *About five and a-half inches high, cluster of roses probably a pinkish-mauve skirt.* . At least three fellow amateurs had instructions to look out for her, her description was circulated among a score of antique-shops and though not quite so intensive as a police hunt, the search nevertheless continued with a good deal of casual persistence

And meanwhile, from the mantelpiece in the study, these ladies of quality exercised their beneficent influence About a week after their arrival, for example Sherrard suddenly noticed a pot of marmalade, which had been standing there for two months, and moved it back into the dining-room In the course of time there were also cleared away two bottles of hair tonic several unwashed glasses, and a miscellaneous litter of small personal effects thus leaving an expanse of shelf so easy and satisfactory to dust, that Sherrard actually dedicated an old evening sock to that very purpose The rest of the room, to be sure, remained undisturbed, but he never sat down before his spotless mantelshelf without a virtuous glow

It was in one of these moods of expansive righteousness that Sherrard suddenly decided to make up a bundle of periodicals and post them on to a kindred spirit unfortunately exiled in Rhodesia and the first paper he chanced to lay hands on was the current number of the *Sussex Advertiser* He had got it for an article on the Arundel tapestries and read no farther than that one page but

now smoothing it out over the desk his attention was caught by the modest notice of an impending sale

It was obviously nothing worth bothering about of that Sherrard was certain in the instant of reading Just another small country house selling up its bedroom suites and a slight feeling of sympathy for the owner of Frewen Lodge was by no means sufficient inducement for a trip almost to the coast. *Frewen Lodge, Dallington, just outside Worthing* and something about Interesting Old China that was probably a stock phrase of the auctioneers' It was nothing worth bothering about but once again making indeed no more than twice in his lifetime—an instinct was stronger than judgment. Sherrard had, in fact what the American language (which he heartily disliked) describes as a hunch with the result that two days later when the contents of Frewen Lodge would be open to inspection, he departed from Town after an early lunch and reached the village of Dallington about half-past three

It was not a day to attract large crowds Wind and rain between them had made the journey down peculiarly unpleasant, and it was in a frankly bad temper that Sherrard left his bag at the Three Pigeons and walked through the drizzle to Frewen Lodge A small early Victorian villa its general appearance did nothing to reassure him the grounds seemed to be large but uncared-for the woodwork needed paint and within three minutes of arriving Sherrard was intensely conscious that he had wasted his time

There were present besides himself four elderly women, two dealers with cockney accents, and one small boy Only the women showed any real interest, and that purely from a spirit of cut-throat rivalry which sent them one after the other to prod the same sofa and ring the same glass The small boy on the other hand, who had come in merely for shelter, and the two dealers who were looking for walnut, displayed a lack of animation that augured badly for the next day's sale Nor could Sherrard blame them. The house had apparently been furnished *en bloc* towards the end of the nineteenth century chiefly in mahogany and bamboo while a liberal garnish of Eastern curios bore witness to the extreme gullibility of the Englishman abroad. As for the china—the interesting old china that had brought Sherrard all the way from Town—it consisted of no more than three-quarters of a Spode tea service and some optimistic imitations of *famille verte* Sherrard swore

My view entirely sir said a voice behind him

It was the elder of the two dealers Mr Whale of Whale and Prickett, who had thus relieved his soul with a burst of vicarious profanity He was a mild little man however blue-eyed and ancient, and now scanned his companion's face anxiously before going on

Glad you agree with me, said Sherrard crossly, "It's a lot of junk"

Ah! You ought to 'a seen the first sale—when they moved from the manor More'n twenty years ago, that was, and London dealers thick as flies. Walnut that's what they were after, and silver mugs from before Queen Elizabeth Mr Whale nodded impressively

Someone must have cleared a packet out of that," said Sherrard

So they did. Mr Frewen, he came out of it with every penny of thirty thousand pounds. But it didn't last," said Mr Whale mournfully "There were his debts, o course, but that wasn't it. Millions wouldn't have lasted not with Mr Frewen They say he lost a cool ten thousand the very next week backing horses."

Then in future it looks as though he'll have to confine himself to greyhounds murmured Sherrard glancing round the dilapidated room

"Who, Mr Frewen, sir? The faded blue eyes stared curiously "Mr Frewen died three weeks back—and owing money just as though there'd never been that first sale at all *This* sale's by order of his daughter"

But Sherrard had already been given enough to think about, and made no comment Was it just possible he wondered that there was still something worth having in Frewen Lodge—some small china figure perhaps, overlooked in the plenitude of that first great sale, and now languishing in obscurity on a servant's dressing-table? The bedrooms that was the place to look and to Mr Whale's extreme disappointment Sherrard turned on his heel and made for the stairs

Even compared with the rest of the house the bedrooms were disappointing

There was still a good deal of bamboo but the mahogany had given place to fumed oak, and not a single piece of old Bow decorated the overmantels

With every intention of going straight back to the Three Pigeons town, and Queen Anne's Gate Sherrard came out of the front attic and crossed the landing There was one more door opposite, however which he had not yet tried, and seeing it ajar he pushed it open and found himself on the threshold of what had obviously been the nursery It contained one very old upright piano, one equally old rocking

horse, and a large, useful table, at which, as though to complete the picture a young lady sat doing her sums

"I BEG your pardon," said Sherrard

With a swift, defensive movement she rose to her feet and he saw that she was very tall and slim and dark, and perhaps five years older than he had originally judged, or it might have been because her cheeks probably never warmer than a camellia petal were now as white as paper

"I'm sorry but this room isn't on view"

"I beg your pardon," said Sherrard again and was about to retire when all at once she put out her hand and asked a question. She said breathlessly —

"Please tell me—are there many people here?"

In the split second before he answered Sherrard had a rapid and accurate vision of the four old women, the two local dealers, and the little boy. Then he looked again at Miss Frewen's face and the table with the exercise book

"A whole crowd," said Sherrard

The sudden pleasure in her eyes alarmed him, but instead of running out to see, she fortunately sat down again rather abruptly, as though her knees had given beneath her

"Thank you. I could go down myself of course——"

"You're much better where you are," said Sherrard and glancing round the room saw it to be provisioned with a bowl of eggs, half a loaf and butter in a blue plate. Miss Frewen had evidently taken up her quarters for the day

"Did you by any chance notice," she asked, anxiously (and thus acknowledging him as friend and ally), "whether Mr Corrigan was here?"

"I'm afraid I shouldn't recognize him," said Sherrard, reverting thankfully to the truth "I've just come down from Town"

Again that wholly unwarranted delight transfigured her

"From Town? For the sale? How did you hear of it?"

With a slight stirring of conscience he remembered his friend in Rhodesia. The parcel was not yet posted was not yet even packed. Then he did his best to be disillusioning

"I happened to be passing through the village and saw your notice. By the way—my name's Sherrard"

She had evidently never heard of his china

"And I'm Miss Frewen." She looked up at him a moment, then at the open page of her exercise-book all covered over with simple addition and appeared to make up her mind. "Mr Sherrard—I know it's an odd question—but perhaps you'd give me an opinion. How much do you think we shall get?"

There was a tiny pause

"I know there isn't much—all the good things went when we left the manor. My father took this place ready furnished to save trouble. But after all—a whole houseful of furniture, Mr Sherrard?"

For a long moment Sherrard stood silent his eyes fixed (how grimly he did not know) on the mild countenance of the rocking-horse and then very gently she released him from his dilemma.

"I see—I understand," said Miss Frewen. "It was very nice of you." And from the way she bent over the table he knew he was meant to go

The rain had slackened a little and nodding absently to Mr Whale, Sherrard strolled back to the Three Pigeons and booked a room. Without any particular reason he had decided to stay for the sale

"Lot two hundred and thirty" announced the auctioneer and purely as a matter of form indicated a depressing bundle made up of odd lengths of stair-carpet and two or three tapestry antimacassars. No one wanted them and he passed hopelessly on to a pair of bamboo plant-stands. No one wanted them either and five minutes later at a total of one hundred and fifteen pounds, the sale came to an end

From his corner by the door Sherrard had watched the proceedings with mounting dismay. After an evening in the bar of the Three Pigeons there was nothing he could learn about either the magnitude of the Frewen debts or the deplorable state of the Frewen finances, and as a result had conceived the most curious mixture of feelings half pure annoyance and half an almost painful admiration, for the white-cheeked girl upstairs. He knew, for example, that she was under no legal obligation to sell up the Lodge. James Frewen had made it over to her, lock, stock and barrel nine years before his death. The last sensible thing he ever did, said the bar of the Three Pigeons. And now here was Miss Frewen throwing it all away in an absurd quixotic attempt to pay off the old man's debts

"Damned unnecessary," growled Sherrard to himself; for in his opinion not one of the debtors needed the money so badly as the girl herself. She would quite probably starve, and though no concern of his the possibility was vaguely disturbing. Young women, thought Sherrard irritably had no business to be unprovided for and it was with some half-formed notion of

*It was a strip about five feet long, closely patterned with a design of green foliage Sherrard leaned dizzily against the wall and stared and stared again*

giving her a piece of his mind that he wandered half an hour longer through the empty rooms. But Miss Frewen remained inside. He had not the least excuse for seeking her out; and he was just crossing the hall for the last time (with one eye at least cocked on the landing), when his foot tripped over a bundle of mats and brought him ignominously to the floor.

IT was the fitting climax to a thoroughly unprofitable morning. By a supreme effort of will, Sherrard refrained from smashing an unsold what-not hauled himself to his feet, and began to gather up the component parts of lot two hundred and thirty. There were several pieces of old stair-carpet, three antimacassars of near-Eastern origin, another length of Axminster—and then something that made him lean dizzily against the wall and stare and stare again.

It was a strip about five feet long and a yard wide, closely patterned with a design of green foliage, and bearing a certain resemblance, in tone and colouring, to the rest of the bundle; but Sherrard knew just enough about Brussels tapestry to fling it over his arm and dash headlong upstairs.

Smoothed out between them on the nursery table, the Frewen altar-piece showed no more than two three-cornered rents and one patch of moth. And as the lady of the house lifted her head Sherrard saw for the first time a tinge of colour in either cheek.

"But—but what is a *verdure*?" asked Miss Frewen.

"A *verdure*," explained Sherrard, rapidly, "is a piece of tapestry covered with foliage-pattern and made at Brussels in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is probably fourteenth, but I can't swear to it. The last piece sold at Christie's went for about five thousand."

Miss Frewen gasped.

"To-day they probably won't fetch quite so much, but even so, I believe there's always a market. In any case, you're all right."

He said it with genuine satisfaction; and as for the girl, her radiance was like a leaping fire that lit the whole room.

"It'll just cover them," she said, thankfully.

The first chill of suspicion brought him to his feet.

"Cover what?"

"The rest of the debts, of course," replied Miss Frewen.

With an effort Sherrard took hold of himself. "I mustn't swear at her," he thought; and with that proviso gathered all his eloquence.

"My dear Miss Frewen, you've done your damnedest—you've done everything that can possibly be expected of you—even to selling up everything you possess. And now after it's all over, there comes this gift from the gods. You take it."

Then Miss Frewen said something so silly that he almost groaned with exasperation.

"But I don't need it," said Miss Frewen.

"Don't need it, my God! You go and leave yourself penniless——"

"I'm not penniless. I've got fifty pounds."

"Fifty pounds!"

"And of course I shall find work."

"The demand for unskilled labour," said Sherrard, furiously, "has practically ceased to exist."

"But I shan't be unskilled," pointed out Miss Frewen. "I'm going to learn shorthand."

And at that, at the idiotic gallantry of it, all Sherrard's anger melted suddenly away; the harangue died on his lips, and he stood looking at her in silence, with the eyes of a man who has found the thing he seeks.

It would be absurd to say that Sherrard's wife bears any resemblance to a piece of old flow. She has previously been described as dark, very slender, and with a skin like camellia petals, whereas the ladies on the mantelpiece are all three complexioned like milkmaids and delicately buxom. In Sherrard's opinion, however—and he has something of an eye for ladies of quality—in Sherrard's opinion, the set is now complete.

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For Such Gravies, Steaks, etc.

# PERPLEXITIES

### 138.—POULTRY DEALING

A LIVERPOOL reader sets a problem before us which the mathematician will solve by means of an equation for which there is only one solution in positive integers. It is likely, however, that some ingenious and persevering readers will discover the answer without any knowledge of the "higher" mathematics. Here is the problem:—

A poultry farmer went to market and bought turkeys at as many shillings per turkey as he bought turkeys. He then sold geese at the same price per head as he had paid for the turkeys. He then sold four of the turkeys at a profit of twenty-five per cent. on what they cost him, and next sold as many chickens, at two shillings per head, as he had sold geese. He now found himself with nine shillings more than when he started. How many turkeys did he buy, and how many geese did he sell?

### 139.—FIGURES IN LITERATURE

Mr. Hosiery (Hosiers) has prepared the following simple addition:

```
  2160 5
     2 51
-------
237789
```

Now, in this sum, the digits (from 0 to 9) stand for certain letters of the alphabet, and when these are discovered, it will be found that we have added together the surnames of two famous Scottish writers and produced a third. Readers will observe that each line starts with the same digit—that is, each name starts with the same letter. If this hint is not enough, it may be added that the key-letters, anagrammatically arranged, form "A NICE BRUSH."

### 140.—NOVELISTS AND THEIR WORKS.

In each of the sentences below there is an anagram of the name of a novelist and also of one of his works. Each anagram consists of two or more words, but the words used are always consecutive. Further hints are given after each sentence:

1) As the lorry weighed seven tons, it was foolish of me to drive a car into it. (*Two words form an anagram of a Victorian novelist, and three words an anagram of one of his books.*)
2) In making the children's cakes, I substituted one word in the cookery book, and that one word did make a difference. (*Two words give another Victorian novelist, and three words one of his books. Both author and title also consist of two words.*)
3) A ripe style combined with a pathos that would melt even pagan hearts, made his stories very popular. (*Two words give the surname of a living novelist, and three words the title of a book published within the last few years.*)
4) Finding the going so dull, I decide to rest in the long grass, where myriads of insects, after taking an intense interest in me, fortunately at last ignore me. (*Four words form an anagram of a minor novelist's name, and another four words similarly give the title of one of his books published within the last two years.*)

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 134.—THE DAY'S WALK

A sketch-map will suit the places, and H for the Halfway House, let CD = $x$ miles.

Then AB = $2x$, BC = $2x - 2$, AD = $3x + 3$, and, from the narrative, AHC and HBD are known to be right angles (DHC = HBD = HBA). Now $AB^2 + BC^2 = AC^2$, or $AD^2 + CD^2 = 2(x+1)^2$, i.e. $(3x+3)^2 + (2x-2)^2 = 2(x+1)^2$, which gives $x(x-16) = 0$. So (as $x$ cannot possibly vanish) $x = 16$, and hence AB is 64 miles, BC is 48, and DA, 84.

The total distance walked, then (exclusive of "pottering" at Chalbury), was 232 miles.

### 135.—A STANZA IN HEBREWS

THE key word was MASPOKTUNE.

The stanza, therefore, reads:—

If Nemesis smites
If Fortune is stern,
It is no use to blame
Nor even effort to learn.
For times of strife or sore unrest
No matter who be to trace cast

### 137.—CUBIST CAKES

If A's cake consisted of $m$ cubes, its height in inches would be $\frac{m(m+2)}{4}$, and B's, of $n$ cubes, would be $\frac{n(n+1)}{2}$ inches high.

The smallest size possible would be given by $m = n = 5$, each being then 15 inches high, and hardly a wedding-cake dimensions.

The next case of identical height is given by $m = 9$, $n = 8$, which was the size adopted.

The cakes were therefore a yard high, and B's had the greater volume, viz. $\frac{8^3}{4} - \frac{9^3}{4} = 1296$ cubic inches (A's having 1215 cubic inches).

The next equality of height occurs when $m = 44$, $n = 33$. Such a pair of cakes would be 484 in. high. B's would have a volume of about 82 cubic feet (and would weigh a good many tons, possibly 10—but this would depend on the richness of the cake!—while A would have a grapple with only about half this amount).

### 141.—AND THEREBY HANGS—

(1) ATHELSTANE. (2) LEATHERHEAD. (3) PSALTERY. (4) MALAFERT. (5) TRAGEDIENNE. (6) STIPULATE. (7) CHARITABLE. (8) ELABORATE. (9) MUSICIANTE. (10) CENTERBEAST.

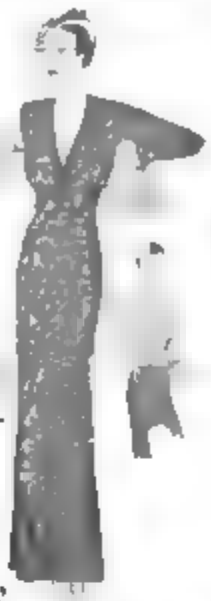
### 136.—THE FAMILY TREE

A SCORE need be no more than seven, provided they are an old man and his wife, together with their son, accompanied by his wife, his two daughters and their son.

### HOW MANY SHOES

As many shoes as there are inhabitants in the city. The "one-legged" gentlemen must each be half of the remainder of the population, so that is equivalent to all the remaining population wearing one shoe apiece. The percentage of the one-legged might, of course, be any other than the five stated in the problem. The answer must always be the same.

the woman who considers well - designed personal dressmaking desirable should call to-day at [illegible] to finer value can be obtained in all england. [illegible] post the coupon below [illegible]



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A Riley Billiard Table is an unfailing centre of attraction in any home. It provides wholesome pleasure and recreation for all, even the children, and Riley Billiards quite thrilling and substantial adornment to stay indoors on winter evenings. Keep your children's home [illegible] a Riley.

For 13/3 down you can have the popular 6 ft. "Home" Billiard Table delivered to your door ready for play. The balance you may monthly. [illegible] Price £11 10s. Of Riley's "Home" Billiard Tables are comfortably on ordinary dining tables, and can be had in the following sizes:

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|---|---|---|
| 5 ft. 4 ins. x 2 ft. 4 ins. | £7 | 0 0 |
| 5 ft. 4 ins. x 2 ft. 10 ins. | £8 | 0 0 |
| 6 ft. 4 ins. x 3 ft. 4 ins. | £11 | 10 0 |
| 7 ft. 4 ins. x 3 ft. 10 ins. | £18 | 0 0 |
| 8 ft. 4 ins. x 4 ft. 4 ins. | £21 | 10 0 |

or in 20 monthly payments of 6/-, 10/3, 13/3, £1/-, £1/5.

RILEY'S "COMBINE" BILLIARD AND DINING TABLE

This is the Riley "Cabriole" design 6 ft. size [illegible]

The [illegible] form [illegible] table [illegible] styles [illegible] or easy levels, below are prices for the various [illegible] mahogany tables

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 ft. 4 ins. x 2 ft. 10 ins. | £21 | 10 0 |
| 5 ft. 4 ins. x 3 ft. 4 ins. | £25 | 10 0 |
| 7 ft. 4 ins. x 3 ft. 10 ins. | £33 | 0 0 |
| 8 ft. 4 ins. x 4 ft. 4 ins. | £43 | 0 0 |

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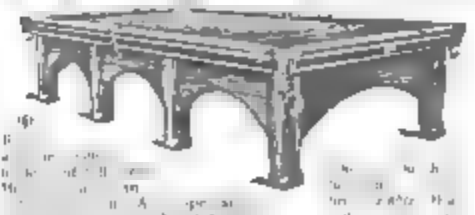

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# YOU AND YOUR HOME

*A Monthly Miscellany for the Modern Woman*

*Conducted by*

**"MILADY"**

*Inquiries should be addressed to "MILADY," c/o THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply.*

**The Ideal Holiday.**

These may be early days to be thinking about holidays, but I am broaching the subject now so that you will have time to consider the suggestion I have to make. If you are tired of the conventional seaside sojourn, why not try something quite different? How would you like a healthful restful cruise on the lakes and rivers of the famous Norfolk Broads, with their peaceful waters, quaint old-world villages, and health-giving air? You hire a fully-equipped wherry, yacht, or motor-boat according to your taste and the size of your party, and go wherever you like, at your own pace. If desired, you can have an attendant to manage the craft and attend to the cooking; all you have to do is to enjoy yourself. The cost—including boat, food and *everything*—averages about £4 a head per week, and you are absolutely your own master. Think it over and, if the idea appeals to you, let me tell you the best people to go to for your boat. But don't leave your decision too late!

**The Virtues of Yeast.**

Never before, probably, has the interdependence of health and happiness been so fully realized. Yet, ironically enough, a perfect state of health has probably never before been so difficult to maintain. We live artificially—and in the majority of cases pay the penalty. How to placate Nature for the outrages that civilization imposes upon her is a problem for all of us; and a means of doing so cannot fail to command our attention. Such a method has recently been placed upon the market as the outcome of prolonged research. The medicinal virtues of live yeast have long been known to doctors. Hitherto, however, there have been numerous obstacles in the way of preparing this substance for public use while retaining all its virtues. It is claimed that these difficulties have now been completely overcome with the production of yeast in its most concentrated, active form, containing nothing in the nature of a drug but possessing unique remedial and tonic properties. It may be taken by adults or children with absolute safety and involves absolutely no change of diet or habits. The name of this admirable preparation is yours for the asking.

**Rest for the Feet.**

Women who have to do a lot of standing should try a pair of special shoes, with jute soles and canvas uppers, of which I shall be glad to give them the name. These are invaluable either for home or overseas, and will be found particularly restful in hot

(Continued on page 28.)

# FLATULENCE

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## DINNEFORD'S PURE MAGNESIA

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START NOW by WRITING for the FREE booklet showing exactly how you progress from lesson to lesson, marking your envelope "Beginner."

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from one of his students who had no knowledge of piano playing whatever –

> "Bearing in mind the fact that five months ago I could not play a note and can now play music at sight, your course is all and more than it is advertised to be. (Sd.) T. 10

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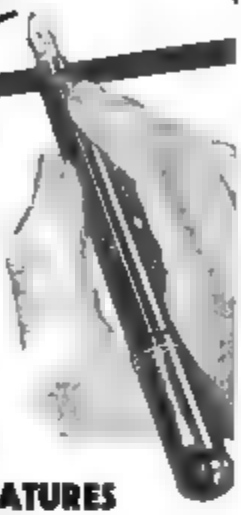

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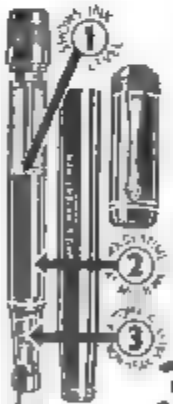

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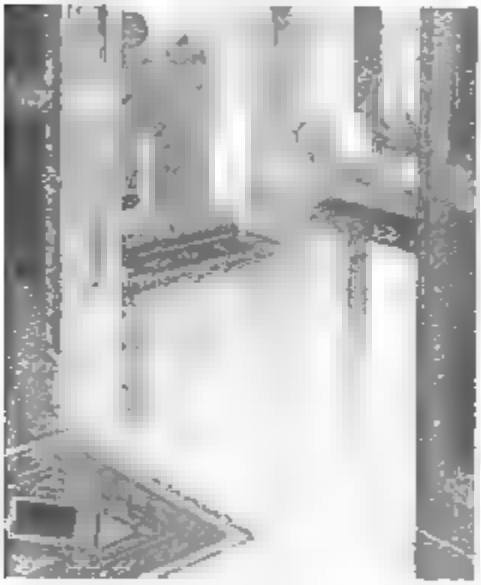
## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

climates, for sport, or on shipboard, they give to every movement and will not "draw" the feet. The ordinary type costs from 4s. 9d. to 7s. 3d. a pair, and there is a wide margin of choice in styles; you can get them with leather-bound soles, leather toecaps and insoles, and also with leather heels. People who are not quite so young as formerly, and who feel the strain of being always on their feet, should certainly investigate the merits of these jute-soled shoes.

### Parquet Flooring.

When you get tired of everlastingly renewing your linoleum, which, at the best never looks like anything but what it is—



*Parquet flooring adds to the value of a house, and actually improves with age.*

I strongly advise you to consider installing parquet flooring. The first expense is the last, for it will endure for a lifetime, actually improving in appearance with every year of its age. It is hygienic, lasting, and so beautiful to look upon, and ideal for dancing. As to the cost, if you go to the right people you need spend very little more than you would give for short-lived linoleum, whereas the parquet is *permanent* and adds to the value of the house.

### Dressing Out of Income.

Every normal, healthy-minded woman likes to look well-turned-out; but in these hard times it is sometimes very difficult to keep up one's own standard. Let me tell you of a system which will greatly simplify matters, and at the same time assure you getting garments bearing the authentic stamp of style. A well-known Old Bond Street house supplies the latest models, specially made for you, at quite reasonable prices, *on the instalment plan*, so that there is no need to dip deeply into your purse when you buy a new frock. I am illustrating one of their creations, a simple velvet evening frock with a flared sleeve jacket. This costs only six guineas for cash, or 18s. monthly. You should call and visit their show-rooms, if you happen to be coming to Town, or at any rate, send for their illustrated fashion guide and details of the payment plan.

*A simple evening frock and jacket in velvet.*

### Rubber For Long Life.

If you want your home to be hygienic up to date, and also pleasantly quiet, you should consider the installation of rubber floors and tiles in such places as the bathroom and nursery. This rubber flooring, for all practical purposes never wears out, it is cheap to lay, particularly easy to keep clean, and can be obtained in a very wide range of colourings and patterns. It is restfully soft to the tread, does not strike cold, and deadens sound.

### Style and Comfort in Footwear.

Shoes that look stylish are not always comfortable, as most of us know to our cost, while really "comfy" footwear is apt to appear the reverse of smart. There is at least one British firm of manufacturers, however, which has succeeded in producing shoes that are both stylish and comfortable, and at strictly moderate prices. I am illustrating one of their models—a very stylish Court shoe in patent with a Louis heel. This costs only 18s. 11d., and is also made in black suède calf at a guinea. These shoes are beautifully built, and available in a great variety of fittings, and will be found to give perfect support and freedom to the feet. During the week commencing March 30th the makers have arranged for special displays in retail shops throughout the country.

*A patent shoe that is both stylish and comfortable.*

*(Continued on page 30.)*

'PHILLIPS' Yeast is LIFE!

# NEW LIFE!

—the marvel of
**PHILLIPS YEAST**

**PHILLIPS YEAST** is PURE LIVE YEAST in its most concentrated, active form, free from any drug, therefore it is absolutely harmless. Prepared in granular form (NOT A TABLET) it is easy to take with meals, thus ensuring *perfect assimilation of food*.

**PHILLIPS YEAST** purifies and tones the entire digestive system. It also enriches the blood, feeds and re-vitalises the nerves and removes the causes of most diseases.

Its life-giving tonic properties make **PHILLIPS YEAST** a *vital necessity* to all those who suffer from the strain of modern-day conditions. It really gives NEW LIFE!

## Phillips PURE LIVE Yeast

**costs only a penny a day!**

Illustration shows actual size of bottle, specially curved to fit the pocket

In granular form (NOT A TABLET) very easy to take, even by children.

**15 days' supply for 1/3**

**OF ALL CHEMISTS**
*including*

Boots Taylors

*and*

Timothy Whites

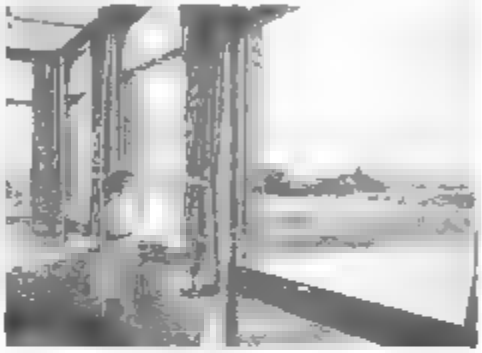
PHILLIPS-YEAST PRODUCTS LTD., PARK ROYAL RD., LONDON, N.W.10
*West End Office 150, Regent St., W.1*

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued)*

### Something New in Windows.

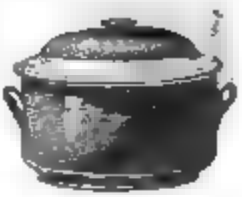
Here is a picture of a novel type of window which I commend to those who are about to build new houses or modernize old ones. This window is as nearly "fool proof" and perfect as human ingenuity can make it. The mere turning of a handle, fixed or detachable, opens or closes it; there is no need for pushing or tugging and no risk of bruised fingers or heavy sashes crashing down. There are, moreover, no clasps or fittings that an unwelcome intruder can get at, so that these windows can well be described as burglar proof. They fit perfectly, excluding all draughts, cannot possibly rattle, and are made in several designs to suit various styles of architecture.



*A new idea in window.*

### About Your Dog.

As most dog-lovers know, this is a difficult time of year for dogs, winter weather and winter ailments take their inevitable toll, and if you want your pet to enjoy life and be the real pal he ought to be you must keep a vigilant eye on his health. There is nothing, in my opinion, to beat a course of condition powders, which will speedily work wonders with a mopey, dull, unanimal, tone up the system and revivify the blood of impurities. The makers of the powders I have in mind offer a free sample full size, to anyone desirous of testing their product. All you have to do is to send them your name and address on a postcard, stating breed and age of dog.



*This casserole is really fireproof.*

### Fireproof Cookery Ware.

If you are looking for really dependable casseroles let me put you on to a line I can recommend with every confidence. These casseroles are of first-class quality and in the round shapes like that illustrated above, can be safely used over the direct heat as well as in the oven. They give splendid results and [illegible]

*This is the time of year when you must watch your dog's health.*

### For the Nursery.

A novel notion for the nursery, which the kiddies will hail with whoops of joy, takes the form of quaint little friezes depicting [illegible] and people. They are printed in the brightest colours, varnished so that they can be washed, and it is a very easy matter to put them up for yourself. These decorative friezes are not expensive, are available in many different designs, and will introduce a welcome note of freshness and originality into the nursery atmosphere.

### Up-to-Date Corsetry.

This paragraph is intended for women who find themselves dissatisfied with their corsets or belts. These things control the figure well enough, possibly, but they do it at the expense of comfort and freedom of movement. If this is your trouble, let me say at once that it can be eliminated. Discomfort is not only irksome, but may become actually dangerous, and there is no the slightest need for it. It is possible to-day to obtain a delightful elastic corselette, exactly fitting the figure and giving the necessary support, yet nevertheless soft and supple as a glove. Moreover, it is made of a porous material, thoroughly hygienic and self-ventilating. The cost? From 30s. upwards. You can have no doubt, you

(Continued on page 32.)

'Mansion,' the quick, easy and economical floor polish gives a mirror-like brilliance to Stained or Parquet Floors and Linoleum. For Dark Woods use Dark Mansion.

**There's a polished home in every tin**

Tins 6d., 10½d. and 1/9. Large Household Tin containing 2 lbs. nett 3/-.

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SWIFTLY, SAFELY, SURELY

**GENASPRIN**

THE SAFE BRAND

**MAKES PAIN FADE AWAY**

**To Stop INDIGESTION in 5 minutes**

take after meals a little

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the worlds antacid & stomach remedy

SEND TO-DAY FOR FREE TRIAL SAMPLE.

**FREE Sample**

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(d. stamp if enclosed.

**GIVE *YOUR* SON *HIS* CHANCE**

A Youth, aged 16 years, [illegible]

**MAXALDING**

In April, 1929, [illegible] and his attitude to life [illegible] MAXALDING [illegible] DOUBLE [illegible] Chest [illegible] Waist [illegible] Calf [illegible] Thigh [illegible] Arms [illegible] Forearm [illegible]

MAIL A CARD FOR FREE EXPLANATORY TREATISE

mentioning Name, Address, Age and Occupation, to

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## YOU AND YOUR HOME.
*(Continued.)*

*The ideal corselette, made of a plastic net giving perfect support.*

have tried one of these ideal belts, how delightfully comfortable they are in wear of what a wonderful foundation they make for frocks. They are moved the last word in scientific figure-control. Let me tell you where you can see them.

**For Wearers of Artificial Limbs.**

Wearers of artificial legs, of either sex, who experience difficulty or discomfort should investigate the claims made on behalf of a patented attachment made by a well-known firm of specialists, which has a number of very important advantages. For a start, it eliminates the need for shoulder braces, thus allowing complete freedom of the chest. Ladies will find it very convenient when wearing evening dress. This ingenious attachment gives additional control of the leg when walking, allows perfect freedom in sitting down, and is not expensive. It can, if desired, be fitted to your present limb.

**"Morning Mouth."**

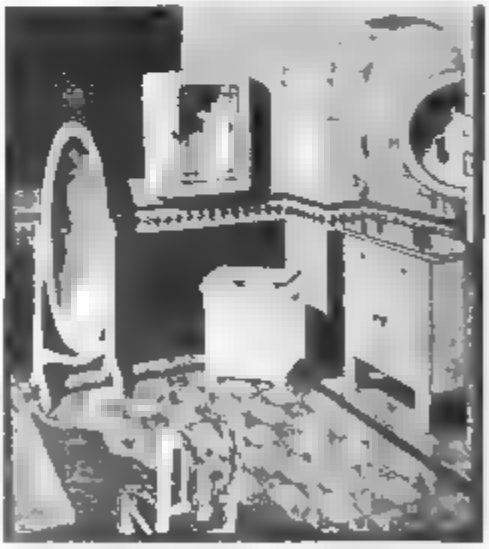
If you wake up in the morning with a dry mouth and a parched throat you should try sucking a pastille made of pure glycerine, flavoured with the juice of black currants. These pastilles soothe the membranes, freshen the palate, and remove all trace of staleness. The product of a famous firm of chemists, they cost only 8d. and 1s. 3d. a box, and are excellent things to keep in the house.

**Winter Protection.**

I have received quite a number of letters concerning the novel "back-vests" I mentioned recently. These give you warmth just where you need it without unwelcome bulk and weight. Made of soft, pure wool, they protect the vital regions of the back—the spine, lungs, and kidneys—and are quite easy to put on. There are "large" and "medium" models for men and women at 6s. and 7s., and a special child's size at 4s. This "back vest" is one of the brightest ideas I have encountered for some time. It safeguards just those parts of the body where most women feel the cold.

**Modernizing the Bathroom.**

The little picture here reproduced will give you some useful ideas as to how to bring your bathroom right up to date. The various items of bathroom furniture shown have a dazzling white finish, most easy to keep clean; all metal fittings are chromium-plated, which means that they will never rust or tarnish; and the mirrors, like the workmanship, are of first-class quality. Finally, the articles are all very reasonably priced. There is a wide selection of these



*Furniture that would improve your bathroom.*

most attractive bathroom "gadgets," and if you would like to see the complete list I shall be glad to furnish the name of the makers.

Milady

*Springtime Bargains in*

# REAL IRISH LINENS

Here are snowy Irish Linen[illegible] bed and table, all of [illegible] quality *and all Bargains!* Order NOW by post direct from Huttons or send a postcard for Complete FREE Bargain [illegible]

**Pillow Case FREE with orders 20/- or over**

**DAMASK NAPKINS**

[illegible] ing[illegible] qua[illegible]

Size [illegible] 4/3

[illegible] 7/ or 13/6 doz

**SUPPER CLOTHS**

[illegible]

Each 2/10

**PILLOW CASES**

[illegible] Each 2/10

**LINEN SHEETING**

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**COMPLETE IRISH LINEN LIST FREE**

[illegible]

**Huttons**

**96, Main St., Larne, N. Ireland.**

**IN THE OVEN OR OVER THE FIRE**

[illegible] There are no [illegible] CASSEROLES. They are recommended by the [illegible] of Hygienic All-round-cleaners [illegible] as well as indirect. The results they give are wonderful

HERBERT'S SUPREME FIREPROOF CASSEROLES

[illegible] high [illegible]

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**WISE MEN AND WOMEN NEVER HAVE A COLD BACK**

[illegible]

**Kozeni**

FOR MEN WOMEN & CHILDREN

**The Marie Elisabeth are REAL Sardines**

Consumers who want Sardines should be very careful to ASK for Sardines. If they ask for a brand only, they expose themselves to the likelihood of being supplied with some other small fish used as a substitute, which is much less valuable from the dietetic, nourishing and palatable point of view than the Sardine, which is really the only fish suitable for preparation in oil. Hence the recommendation

**"DO ASK FOR SARDINES."**

Marie Elisabeth can be asked for with every confidence, for every tin so branded contains real Sardines and never any other fish. Furthermore they are delicious and highly nutritive. They are obtainable throughout the U.K. and their sale is the largest in the World.

# HOW IS IT DONE?

## A Very Remarkable Article

I have a little book before me whose index is the most extraordinary I have ever seen. Obviously the [illegible] cannot be reproduced here, but it begins [illegible] Abrasions, Accidents, Acne, Baboon, Bites, Beetles, Blisters, Brushes, and [illegible] to the alphabet!

[illegible] extraordinary for the very good [illegible] book itself is extraordinary. It says to Use Milton [illegible] the book is. It is the guide to the most remarkable [illegible] ever discovered.

[illegible] so simple and innocent and inexpensive should have such a variety of uses is incredible. But Milton's great and [illegible] is due even more to the fact that it is good [illegible] for. To whatever [illegible] there is no "perhaps" about it.

Stains on white linen or cotton [illegible] brought with the application of Milton. [illegible] immediately banished, the irritation [illegible] and chilblains is instantly relieved [illegible] and influenza is definitely prevented [illegible] use of Milton in accordance with the [illegible] book.

[illegible] of this article is not to tell you [illegible] the whole of this page would not [illegible] space! Its object is not even to [illegible] it you have almost certainly got [illegible] one already for one use or another. [illegible] way, get this *read the book!*

[illegible] few moments, but not only will it provide you with the answer [illegible] hundred and fifty four everyday household

Sutton costs expence—the book, the beautifully printed book packed with every bottle, is free.

# THE DELICATE CHILD

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR PARENTS & LOVERS OF CHILDREN

By

KATHLEEN DANE

NOWADAYS we hear a great deal about the "difficult" child and less than we used to do about the delicate. Yet every delicate boy or girl is persistently tiresome the reason should be sought for first in health, for the "difficulties" of childhood more often than not have their roots in physical disturbances of one kind or another. Early Spring, with its changeable weather and prevalence of epidemics, is apt to be specially trying to the kiddies.

The three most important factors in the health of a growing child are rest, diet, and fresh air—and probably, in these days of universal strain, it is safe to say that rest is the most important of the three. Everything which tends to tax or over-excite the brain should be banished from the hour immediately preceding bed-time, even with healthy children, and far more so in the case of delicate, highly-strung temperaments. Night terrors of various kinds—whether they take the form of bad dreams or nervous fears—can often be minimized by a quiet, restful atmosphere, impressed on the child's mind at this stage of the day. Most parents have the sense to allow a kiddy who is definitely afraid of the dark the solace of a night-light.

If these methods fail to create the preliminary state of repose which leads to perfectly natural sleep, the diet should be overhauled. Many children of the irritable, nervous type owe their state to a deficiency of organic salts, particularly calcium, notwithstanding the fact that the dietary appears to be properly balanced. Such youngsters do well when the diet is reinforced by a well-retained calcium food, such as Ealzara, which medical men all over the country are now recommending.

The mid-day rest is a problem in many homes, and experience points to the fact that it is wisest to allow an active child to amuse itself in a quiet fashion during the rest-hour. Reading aloud from an interesting story-book or children's magazine is probably the ideal recipe for insuring the rest being faithfully adhered to, though quiet games are good variants.

Delicate youngsters should be given as much fresh air as possible. The craze for [illegible] exposing a child to the raw cold of our treacherous climate in a thoughtless undergarment unfortunately seems to be on the wane. No kiddy should ever be allowed to get repeatedly chilled—and it is to be remembered that most delicate children feel the cold far more acutely than grown-ups. Light woollen clothes, in even layers, and without tight tapes or elastics that stop the circulation make for health. Youngsters who are liable to internal colds should wear a woven vest next the skin, and particular care must be taken with regard to wet feet.

A child who is not strong should be carefully watched in the matter of diet. It is often possible to tempt a reluctant appetite by very simple devices in the presentation of everyday dishes. A specially pretty cup or plate, or the addition of a few crystallized rose-leaves, or a cherry, to the uninteresting milk pudding—such details make all the difference, during the first decade of life.

Minor ailments—colds, bilious attacks, cuts, and grazes—should never be ignored. With children it is indeed true that a stitch in time often saves not nine but ninety. Simple old-fashioned remedies, administered in the early stages, will often prevent a great deal of unnecessary suffering.

So far as coughs and colds are concerned, it is an excellent plan to keep in the house a supply of "Grips," those handy "first aid" pastilles.

Patience—and in dealing with a delicate child one needs quite literally, have to move [illegible] that's true for [illegible] patience alone will help the delicate child [illegible] time most minutely well spent for on the foundation of a sickly childhood many men and women have built strong, healthy lives through the care and forethought of others willing to think for them before they could think for themselves.

# THE STRAND MAGAZINE

## Contents for April, 1933

The rights of translation and reproduction in the contents of this number are strictly reserved.

Frontispiece The girl suddenly threw her head back and clutched the sides of it in an ecstasy of hopeless anguish. "Oh Oh Oh!" she cried. "Ah! Ah! Ah!" "I don't get you at all," said Mr. Schnallenhamer.


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| THE RISE OF MINNA NORDSTROM<br>Illustrations by Gilbert Williamson. | P. G. WODEHOUSE | 339 |
| A SHORT GUIDE TO EGYPT<br>Illustrations by Bert Thomas and from Photographs | A. P. HERBERT | 350 |
| MONEY'S WORTH<br>Illustrations by John Paylett | G. B. STERN | 358 |
| POSSESSION<br>Illustrations by F. R. Maxwell. | ROLAND PERTWEE | 369 |
| THE MAN ON THE ROAD<br>Illustration by Gordon Nicoll | TEMPLE THURSTON | 382 |
| THE HOUSE WITH THE KENNELS<br>Illustrations by Jack M. Faulks. | "SAPPER" | 388 |
| SOME WONDERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY<br>With Special Illustrations in Photogravure. | FRANK RUTTER | 400 |
| SPRING!<br>Illustrations by Frank Oldham. | DENIS MACKAIL | 410 |
| A DOG'S DAY<br>Illustrations from Photographs. | CHARLES GRAVES | 419 |
| LAUGH, IF YOU LIKE<br>Illustrations by Alfred Sindall. | DALE COLLINS | 424 |
| FORCING BIDS IN CONTRACT | COLONEL C. G. J. WALSHE | 435 |
| A TUNE ON THE TRIANGLE<br>Illustrations by Illingworth | LYNN DOYLE | 438 |
| ACROSTICS | | 447 |
| PERPLEXITIES | | 448 |


**The characters and names in the stories in "The Strand Magazine" are entirely imaginary and have no reference to real persons.**

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**The Index to Volume 84 can be obtained on application to the Publisher.**

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Ask for and see you get LUVISCA. There's nothing just as good.
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The hair lining below offers luxurious sleeping comfort at moderate cost. Framed in hardwood it takes apart for thorough cleaning and for fitting covers without any trouble. Illustration of both models shown alongside. Stuffed hair and fibre, all springs interlaced with woven wire for permanence.

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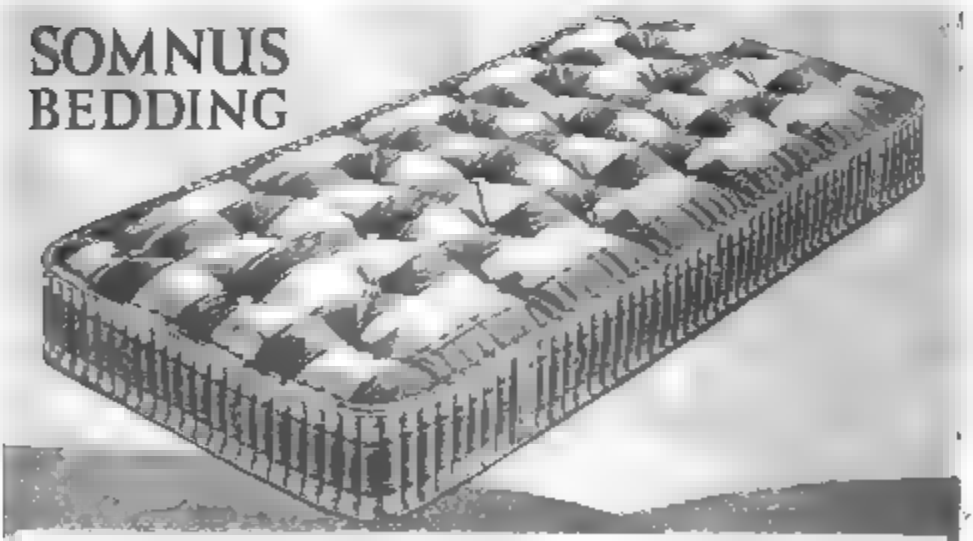

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*Carlton Cross Mills, Leeds, and Lotus Street, Nottingham*

*London Showrooms* 26-27 *Lawrence Lane, Cheapside, E.C.2*

*The*
# STRAND MAGAZINE

*April,*
1933

*The girl suddenly threw her head back and clutched the sides of it in an ecstasy of hopeless anguish "Oh! Oh! Oh!" she cried. "Ah! Ah! Ah!"*

*"I don't get you at all," said Mr Schnellenhamer*

# THE RISE OF MINNA NORDSTROM

## P. G. WODEHOUSE

THEY had been showing the latest Minna Nordstrom picture at the Bijou Dream in the High Street, and Miss Postlethwaite, our sensitive barmaid, who had attended the première, was still deeply affected. She snuffled audibly as she polished the glasses.

"It's really good, is it?" we asked, for in the bar-parlour of the Angler's Rest we lean heavily on Miss Postlethwaite's opinion where the silver screen is concerned. Her verdict can make or mar.

"'Swonderful," she assured us. "It lays bare for all to view the soul of a woman who dared everything for love. A poignant and uplifting drama of life as it is lived to-day, purifying the emotions with pity and terror."

A Rum and Milk said that if it was as good as all that he didn't know but what he might not risk tuppence on it. A Sherry and Bitters wondered what they paid a woman like Minna Nordstrom. A Port from the Wood, raising the conversation from the rather sordid plane to which it threatened to sink, speculated on how motion-picture stars became stars.

"What I mean," said the Port from the Wood, "does a studio deliberately set out to create a star? Or does it suddenly say to itself, Hullo, here's a star. What ho!?"

One of those cynical Dry Martinis who always know everything said that it was all a question of influence.

"If you looked into it, you would find this Nordstrom girl was married to one of the bosses."

Mr Mulliner, who had been sipping his hot Scotch and lemon in a rather distrait way, glanced up.

"Did I hear you mention the name Minna Nordstrom?"

"We were arguing about how she became a star. I was saying that she must have had a pull of some kind."

"In a sense," said Mr Mulliner, "you are right. She did have a pull. But it was one due solely to her own initiative and resource. I have relatives and connexions in Hollywood, as you know, and I learn much of the inner history of the studio world through these channels. I happen to know that Minna Nordstrom raised herself to her present eminence by sheer enterprise and

ILLUSTRATED BY GILBERT WILKINSON

Vol. xxxv.—22.

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determination. If Miss Postlethwaite will mix me another hot Scotch and lemon, this time stressing the Scotch a little more vigorously I shall be delighted to tell you the whole story.

When people talk with bated breath in Hollywood—and it is a place where there is always a certain amount of breath-bating going on—you will generally find that the subject of their conversation is Jacob Z. Schnellenhamer, the popular president of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation (said Mr. Mulmer). For few names are more widely revered there than that of this Napoleonic man.

Ask for an instance of his financial acumen, and his admirers will point to the great merger for which he was responsible: that merger by means of which he combined his own company, the Colossal Exquisite, with those two other vast concerns, the Perfecto-Fishbein and the Zizzbaum-Celluloid. Demand proof of his artistic genius, his flair for recognizing talent in the raw, and it is given immediately. He was the man who discovered Minna Nordstrom.

To-day when interviewers bring up the name of the world-famous star in Mr. Schnellenhamer's presence, he smiles quietly.

"I had long had my eye on the little lady," he says, "but for one reason and another, I did not consider the time ripe for her *début*. Then I brought about what you are good enough to call the epoch-making merger, and I was enabled to take the decisive step. My colleagues questioned

*Mr. Zizzbaum revealed that a recent parlourmaid of his had informed the police of his stock of wines and spirits, and that they had gone off with the whole collection not half an hour since.*

the wisdom of elevating a totally unknown girl to stardom, but I was firm. I saw that it was the only thing to be done.

'You had vision?'

'I had vision.'

All that Mr Schnellenhamer had, however, on the evening when this story begins was a headache. As he returned from the day's work at the studio and sank wearily into an armchair in the sitting-room of his luxurious home in Beverly Hills, he was feeling that the life of the president of a motion-picture corporation was one that he would hesitate to force on any dog of which he was fond.

A morbid meditation, of course, but not wholly unjustified. The great drawback to being the man in control of a large studio is that everybody you meet starts acting at you. Hollywood is entirely populated by those who want to get into the pictures, and they naturally feel that the best way of accomplishing their object is to catch the boss's eye and do their stuff.

SINCE leaving home that morning Mr Schnellenhamer had been acted at practically incessantly. First, it was the studio watchman who, having opened the gate to admit his car, proceeded to play a little scene designed to show what he could do in a heavy *rôle*. Then came his secretary, two book-agents, the waitress who brought him his lunch, a life-insurance man, a representative of a film weekly, and a barber. And, on leaving at the end of the day, he got the watchman again, this time in whimsical comedy.

Little wonder, then, that by the time he reached home the magnate was conscious of a throbbing sensation about the temples and an urgent desire for a restorative.

As a preliminary to obtaining the latter, he rang the bell and Vera Prebble, his parlourmaid, entered. For a moment he was surprised not to see his butler. Then he recalled that he had dismissed him just after breakfast for reciting 'Gunga Din' in a meaning way while bringing the eggs and bacon.

'You rang, sir?'

'I want a drink.'

'Very good, sir.'

The girl withdrew to return a few moments later with a decanter and syphon. The sight caused Mr Schnellenhamer's gloom to lighten a little. He was justly proud of his cellar and he knew that the decanter contained liquid balm. In a sudden gush of tenderness he eyed its bearer appreciatively, thinking what a nice girl she looked.

Until now he had never studied Vera Prebble's appearance to any great extent, or thought about her much in any way. When she had entered his employment a few days before, he had noticed, of course, that she had a sort of ethereal beauty, but then every girl you see in Hollywood has either ethereal beauty or roguish gamineric or a dark, slumberous face that hints at hidden passion.

'Put it down there on the small table,' said Mr Schnellenhamer, passing his tongue over his lips.

The girl did so. Then, straightening herself, she suddenly threw her head back and clutched the sides of it in an ecstasy of hopeless anguish.

'Oh! Oh! Oh!' she cried.

'Eh?' said Mr Schnellenhamer.

'Ah! Ah! Ah!'

'I don't get you at all,' said Mr Schnellenhamer.

She gazed at him with wide, despairing eyes.

'If you knew how sick and tired I am of it all! Tired. Tired. Tired. The lights—the gutter—the gaiety——. It is so hollow, so fruitless. I want to get away from it all! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!'

Mr Schnellenhamer retreated behind the Chesterfield. That laugh had had an unbalanced ring. He had not liked it. He was about to continue his backward progress in the direction of the door when the girl, who had closed her eyes and was rocking to and fro, as if suffering from some internal pain, became calmer.

'Just a little thing I knocked together with a view to showing myself in a dramatic *rôle*,' she said. 'Watch. I'm going to register.'

She smiled.

'Joy.'

She closed her mouth.

'Grief.'

She wiggled her ears.

'Horror.'

She raised her eyebrows.

'Hate.'

Then, taking a parcel from the tray,

'Here,' she said, 'if you would care to glance at them, are a few stills of myself. This shows my face in repose. I call it "Reverie". This is me in a bathing suit, riding—walking—happy among my books—being kind to the dog. Here is one of which my friends have been kind enough to speak in terms of praise—as Cleopatra, the warrior-queen of Egypt, at the Pasadena Gas-Fitters' Ball. It brings out what is generally considered my most effective feature—the nose, seen sideways.'

During the course of these remarks, Mr Schnellenhamer had been standing breathing heavily. For awhile, the discovery that this parlourmaid of whom he had just been thinking so benevolently was simply another snake in the grass had rendered him incapable of speech. Now his aphasia left him.

*"I," said Mr. Schnellenhamer, "if once we start bidding against one another there'll be no limit. There's only one thing to be done. We must merge"*

"Get out!" he said.

"Pardon?" said the girl.

"Get out this minute. You're fired."

There was a silence. Vera Prebble closed her mouth, wiggled her ears, and raised her eyebrows. It was plain that she was grieved horror-stricken, and in the grip of a growing hate.

"What," she demanded, passionately, at length, "is the matter with all you movie-magnates? Have you no hearts? Have you no compassion? No sympathy? No understanding? Do the ambitions of the struggling mean nothing to you?"

"No," replied Mr. Schnellenhamer, in answer to all five questions.

Vera Prebble laughed bitterly.

"No is right!" she said. "For months I besieged the doors of the casting-directors. They refused to cast me. Then I thought that if I could find a way into your homes, I might succeed where I had failed before. I secured the post of parlourmaid to Mr. Fishbein, of the Perfecto-Fishbein. Halfway through Rudyard Kipling's 'Boots' he brutally bade me begone. I obtained a similar position with Mr. Zuzbaum, of the Zuzbaum-Celluloid. The opening lines of

The Wreck of the Hesperus [illegible] passed my lips when he was upstairs helping [illegible] pack my trunk. And now you crush my bones. It is cruel, cruel—— Oh, ha ha-ha-ha-ha!'

She rocked to and fro in an agony of grief. Then an idea seemed to strike her.

'I wonder if you would care to see me in right comedy? No? Oh, very well.'

With a quick droop of the eyelids and a twitch of the muscles of the cheeks she registered resignation.

'Just as you please,' she said. Then her nostrils quivered, and she bared the left canine tooth, to indicate Menace. 'But one last word. Wait!'

'How do you mean, wait?'

'Just wait. That's all.'

For an instant Mr Schnellenhamer was conscious of a twinge of uneasiness. Like all motion-picture magnates, he had about forty-seven guilty secrets, many of them recorded on paper. Was it possible that——

Then he breathed again. All his private documents were secure in a safe-deposit box. It was absurd that this girl could have anything on him.

Relieved, he lay down on the Chesterfield, and gave himself up to daydreams. And

soon as he remembered that that morning he had put through a deal which would enable him to trim the stuffing out of two hundred and seven-three exhibitors, his lips curved in a contented smile, and Vera Prebble was forgotten.

ONE of the advantages of life in Hollywood is that the Servant Problem is not a difficult one. Supply more than equals demand. Ten minutes after you have thrown a butler out of the back door his successor is bowling up in his sports-model car. And the same applies to parlourmaids. By the following afternoon all was well once more with the Schnellenhamer domestic machine. A new butler was cleaning the silver, a new parlourmaid was doing whatever parlourmaids do, which is very little. Peace reigned in the home.

But on the second evening, as Mr Schnellenhamer, the day's tasks over, entered his sitting-room with nothing in his mind but bright thoughts of dinner, he was met by what had all the appearance of a human whirlwind. This was Mrs. Schnellenhamer. A graduate of the silent films, Mrs. Schnellenhamer had been known in her day as the Empress of Stormy Emotion, and she occasionally saw to it that her husband was reminded of this.

"Now see what!" cried Mrs. Schnellenhamer.

Mr Schnellenhamer was perturbed.

Is something wrong?" he asked nervously.

Why did you fire that girl, Vera Prebble?"

She went ha-ha-ha-ha-ha at me."

Well, do you know what she has done? She has laid information with the police that we are harbouring alcoholic liquor on our premises, contrary to law, and this afternoon they came in a truck and took it all away."

Mr Schnellenhamer reeled. The shock was severe. The good man loves his cellar.

"Not all?" he cried almost pleadingly.

All."

"The Scotch?"

Every bottle."

The gin?"

Every drop."

Mr Schnellenhamer supported himself against the Chesterfield.

Not the champagne?" he whispered.

Every case. And here we are with a hundred and fifty people coming to-night including the Duke."

Her allusion was to the Duke of Wigan who, as so many British dukes do, was at this time passing slowly through Hollywood.

And you know how touchy Dukes are," proceeded Mrs. Schnellenhamer. "I'm told that the Lunabelle Mahaffys invited the Duke of Kircudbrightshire for the week-end last year and after he had been there two months he suddenly left in a huff because there was no brown sherry."

A motion-picture magnate has to be a quick thinker. Where a lesser man would have wasted time referring to the recent Miss Prebble as a serpent whom he had to all intents and purposes nurtured in his bosom, Mr Schnellenhamer directed the whole force of his great brain on the vital problem of how to undo the evil she had wrought.

Listen," he said. "It's all right. I'll get the bootlegger on the 'phone, and he'll have us stocked up again in no time."

But he had overlooked the something in the air of Hollywood which urges its every inhabitant irresistibly into the pictures. When he got his bootlegger's number, it was only to discover that that life-saving tradesman was away from home. They were shooting a scene in "Sundered Hearts" on the Outstanding Screen-Favourites lot, and the bootlegger was hard at work there playing the *rôle* of an Anglican bishop. His secretary said he could not be disturbed, as it got him all upset to be interrupted when he was working.

Mr Schnellenhamer tried another bootlegger, then another. They were out on location.

And it was just as he had begun to despair that he bethought him of his old friend, Isadore Fishbein, and into his darkness there shot a gleam of hope. By the greatest good fortune it so happened that he and the president of the Perfecto-Fishbein were at the moment on excellent terms, neither having slipped anything over on the other for several weeks. Mr Fishbein, moreover, possessed as well-stocked a cellar as any man in California. It would be a simple matter to go round and borrow from him all he needed.

Patting Mrs. Schnellenhamer's hand and telling her that there were still bluebirds singing in the sunshine, he ran to his car and leaped into it.

The residence of Isadore Fishbein was only a few hundred yards away, and Mr Schnellenhamer was soon whizzing in through the door. He found his friend beating his head against the wall of the sitting-room and moaning to himself in a quiet undertone.

Is something the matter?" he asked surprised.

There is," said Mr Fishbein, selecting a fresh spot on the tapestried wall and starting to beat his head against that. "The police came round this afternoon and took away everything I had."

Everything?"

Well, not Mrs Fishbein," said the other,

with a touch of regret in his voice. She's up in the bedroom with eight cubes of ice on her forehead in a linen bag. But they took every drop of everything else. A serpent that's what she is.'

"Mrs. Fishbein?"

'Not Mrs. Fishbein. That parlourmaid. That Vera Prebble. Just because I stopped her when she got to 'boots, boots, boots, boots, marching over Africa' she ups and informs the police on me. And Mrs. Fishbein with a hundred and eighty people coming to-night, including the ex-King of Ruritania!'

And, crossing the room, the speaker began to bang his head against a statue of Genius Inspiring The Motion-Picture Industry.

A good man is always appalled when he is forced to contemplate the depths to which human nature can sink, and Mr. Schnellenhamer's initial reaction on hearing of this fresh outrage on the part of his late parlourmaid was a sort of sick horror. Then the brain which had built up the Colossal-Exquisite began to work once more.

'Well, the only thing for us to do,' he said, 'is to go round to Ben Zuzbaum and borrow some of his stock. How do you stand with Ben?'

"I stand fine with Ben," said Mr. Fishbein, cheering up. "I heard something about him last week which I'll bet he wouldn't care to have known.'

"Where does he live?"

"Camden Drive."

"Then tally-ho!" said Mr. Schnellenhamer, who had once produced a drama in eight reels of two strong men battling for a woman's love in the English hunting district.

They were soon at Mr. Zuzbaum's address. Entering the sitting-room, they were shocked to observe a form rolling in circles round the floor with its head between its hands. It was travelling quickly, but not so quickly that they were unable to recognize it as that of the chief executive of the Zuzbaum Celluloid Corporation. Stopped as he was completing his eleventh lap, and pressed for an explanation, Mr. Zuzbaum revealed that a recent parlourmaid of his, Vera Prebble by name, piqued at having been dismissed for deliberate and calculated reciting of the works of Mrs. Hemans, had informed the police of his stock of wines and spirits, and that the latter had gone off with the whole collection not half an hour since.

"And don't speak so loud," added the stricken man, "or you'll wake Mrs. Zuzbaum. She's in bed with ice on her head."

'How many cubes?" asked Mr. Fishbein.

'Six.'

'Mrs. Fishbein needed eight,' said that lady's husband, a little proudly.

The situation was one that might well have unmanned the stoutest motion-picture executive, and there were few motion-picture executives stouter than Jacob Schnellenhamer. But it was characteristic of this man that the tightest corner was always the one to bring out the full force of his intellect. He thought of Mrs. Schnellenhamer waiting for him at home, and it was as if an electric shock of high voltage had passed through him.

'I've got it,' he said. 'We must go to Glutz of the Medulla-Oblongata. He's never been a real friend of mine, but if you loan him Stella Sveste and I loan him Orlando Byng, and Fishbein loans him Oscar the Wonder-Poodle, on his own terms, I think he'll consent to give us enough to see us through to-night. I'll get him on the phone."

It was some moments before Mr. Schnellenhamer returned from the telephone-booth. When he did so, his associates were surprised to observe in his eyes a happy gleam.

"Boys,' he said, 'Glutz is away with his family over the week-end. The butler and the rest of the help are out joy-riding. There's only a parlourmaid in the house. I've been talking to her. So there won't be any need for us to give him those stars after all. We'll just run across in the car with a few axes, and help ourselves. It won't cost us above a hundred dollars to square this girl. She can tell him she was upstairs when the burglars broke in and didn't hear anything. And there we'll be, with all the stuff we need, and not a cent to pay outside of overhead connected with maid.'

There was an awed silence.

"Mrs. Fishbein will be pleased."

"Mrs. Zuzbaum will be pleased."

"And Mrs. Schnellenhamer will be pleased," said the leader of the expedition. "Where do you keep your axes, Zuzbaum?"

"In the cellar."

"Fetch 'em!" said Mr. Schnellenhamer in the voice a Crusader might have used in giving the signal to start against the Paynim.

In the ornate residence of Sigismund Glutz, meanwhile, Vera Prebble, who had entered the service of the head of the Medulla-Oblongata that morning and was already under sentence of dismissal for having informed him with appropriate gestures that a bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the Malemute saloon, was engaged in writing on a sheet of paper a short list of names, one of which she proposed to adopt as a *nom de théâtre* as soon as her screen career should begin.

For this girl was essentially an optimist, and not even all the rebuffs which she had suffered had been sufficient to quench the fire of ambition in her.

Wiggling her tongue as she shaped the letters, she wrote:—

URSULINE DELMAINE
THEODORA TRIX
UVULA GLADWYN

None of them seemed to her quite what she wanted. She pondered. Possibly something a little more foreign and exotic

GRETA GARBO

No, that had been used.

And then suddenly inspiration descended upon her and, trembling a little with emotion she inscribed on the paper the one name that was absolutely and indubitably right

MINNA NORDSTROM

The more she looked at it, the better she liked it. And she was still regarding it proudly when there came the sound of a car stopping at the door and a few moments later in walked Mr. Schnellenhamer, Mr. Zizzbaum, and Mr. Fishbein. They all wore Homburg hats, and carried axes.

Vera Prebble drew herself up.

"All goods must be delivered in the rear," she had begun haughtily when she recognized her former employers, and paused, surprised.

The recognition was mutual. Mr. Fishbein started. "So did Mr. Zizzbaum.

"Serpent!" said Mr. Fishbein.

"Viper!" said Mr. Zizzbaum.

Mr. Schnellenhamer was more diplomatic. Though as deeply moved as his colleagues by the sight of this traitress, he realized that this was no time for invective.

"Well, well, well," he said, with a geniality which he strove to render frank and winning, "I never dreamed it was you on the phone, my dear. Well, this certainly makes everything nice and smooth—us all being, as you might say, old friends."

"Friends?" retorted Vera Prebble. "Let me tell you——"

"I know, I know. Quite, quite. But listen. I've got to have some liquor tonight——"

"What do you mean, you have?" said Mr. Fishbein.

"It's all right, it's all right," said Mr. Schnellenhamer soothingly. "I was coming to that. I wasn't forgetting you. We're all in this together. The good old spirit of co-operation. You see, my dear," he went on, "that little joke you played on us—oh, I'm not blaming you. Nobody laughed more heartily than myself——"

"Yes, they did," said Mr. Fishbein, "and have now to the fact that this girl before him must be conciliated. I did."

"So did I," said Mr. Zizzbaum.

"We all laughed very heartily," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "You should have heard us. A girl of spirit, we said to ourselves. Still, the little pleasantry has left us in something of a difficulty, and it will be worth a hundred dollars to you, my dear, to go upstairs and put cotton-wool in your ears while we get at Mr. Glutz's cellar door with our axes."

Vera Prebble raised her eyebrows.

"What do you want to break down the cellar door for? I know the combination of the lock."

"You do?" said Mr. Schnellenhamer, joyfully.

"I withdraw that expression. Serpent," said Mr. Fishbein.

"When I used the term Viper," said Mr. Zizzbaum, "I was speaking thoughtlessly."

"And I will tell it you," said Vera Prebble, "at a price."

SHE drew back her head and extended an arm, twiddling the fingers at the end of it. She was plainly registering something, but they could not discern what it was.

"There is only one condition on which I will tell you the combination of Mr. Glutz's cellar, and that is this. One of you has got to give me a starring contract for five years."

The magnates started.

"Listen," said Mr. Zizzbaum, "you don't want to star."

"You wouldn't like it," said Mr. Fishbein.

"Of course you wouldn't," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "You would look silly, starring—an inexperienced girl like you. Now, if you had said a nice small part——"

"Star."

"Or featured——"

"Star."

The three men drew back a pace or two and put their heads together.

"She means it," said Mr. Fishbein.

"Her eyes," said Mr. Zizzbaum. "Like stones."

"A dozen times I could have dropped something heavy on that girl's head from an upper landing, and I didn't do it," said Mr. Schnellenhamer, remorsefully.

Mr. Fishbein threw up his hands.

"It's no use. I keep seeing that vision of Mrs. Fishbein floating before me with eight cubes of ice on her head. I'm going to star this girl."

"You are?" said Mr. Zizzbaum. "And get the stuff? And leave me to go home and tell Mrs. Zizzbaum there won't be anything to drink at her party to-night for a hundred and eleven guests including the

*"You mustn't believe everything that girl tells you. She's a great knader," said Mr Schnellenhamer "You will find nothing here, sergeant"*

Vice-President of Switzerland? No, sir *I* am going to star her."

"I'll outbid you."

"You won't outbid *me*. Not till they bring me word that Mrs. Zizzbaum has lost the use of her vocal cords.

"Listen," said the other tensely. "When it comes to using vocal cords, Mrs. Fishbein begins where Mrs. Zizzbaum leaves off."

Mr. Schnellenhamer, that cool head, saw the peril that loomed.

"Boys," he said, "if once we start bidding against one another there'll be no limit. There's only one thing to be done. We must merge."

His powerful personality carried the day. It was the President of the newly-formed Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation who a few moments later stepped forward and approached the girl.

"We agree," he said.

AND, as he spoke, there came the sound of some heavy vehicle stopping in the road outside. Vera Prebble uttered a stricken exclamation.

"Well, of all the silly girls!" she cried, distractedly. "I've just remembered that an hour ago I telephoned the police informing them of Mr. Glutz's cellar. And here they are."

Mr. Fishbein uttered a cry, and began to look round for something to bang his head against. Mr. Zizzbaum gave a short, sharp moan, and started to lower himself to the floor. But Mr. Schnellenhamer was made of sterner stuff.

"Pull yourself together, boys," he begged them. "Leave all this to me. Everything is going to be all right. Things have come to a pretty pass," he said, with a dignity as impressive as it was simple, "if a free-born American citizen cannot bribe the police of his native country."

"True," said Mr. Fishbein, arresting his head when within an inch and a quarter of a handsome Oriental vase.

"True, true," said Mr. Zizzbaum, getting up and dusting his knees.

"Just let me handle the whole affair," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "Ah, boys," he went on, genially.

Three policemen had entered the room—a sergeant, a patrolman and another patrolman. Their faces wore a wooden, hard-boiled look.

"Mr. Glutz?" said the sergeant.

"Mr. Schnellenhamer," corrected the great man. "But Jacob to you, old friend."

The sergeant seemed in no wise mollified by this amability.

"Prebble, Vera?" he asked, addressing the girl.

"Nordstrom, Minna," she replied.

"Got the name wrong, then. Anyway, it was you who phoned us that there was alcoholic liquor on the premises?"

Mr. Schnellenhamer laughed amusedly.

"You mustn't believe everything that girl tells you, sergeant. She's a great kidder. Always was. If she said that it was just one of her little jokes. I know Glutz. I know his views. And many is the time I have heard him say that the laws of his country are good enough for him, and that he would scorn not to obey them. You will find nothing here, sergeant."

"Well, we'll try," said the other. "Show us the way to the cellar," he added, turning to Vera Prebble.

Mr. Schnellenhamer smiled a winning smile.

"Now, listen," he said. "I've just remembered. I'm wrong. Silly mistake to make, and I don't know how I made it. There is a certain amount of the stuff in the house, but I'm sure you dear chaps don't want to cause any unpleasantness. You're broadminded. Listen. Your name's Murphy, isn't it?"

"Donahue."

"I thought so. Well, you'll laugh at this. Only this morning I was saying to Mrs. Schnellenhamer that I really must slip down to headquarters and give my old friend Donahue that ten dollars I owed him."

"What ten dollars?"

"I didn't say ten. I said a hundred. One hundred dollars, Donny, old man, and I'm not saying there mightn't be a little over for these two gentlemen here. How about it?"

The sergeant drew himself up. There was no sign of softening in his glance.

"Jacob Schnellenhamer," he said coldly, "you can't square me. When I tried for a job at the Colossa, Exquisite last spring I was turned down on account you said I had no sex-appeal."

The first patrolman, who had hitherto taken no part in the conversation, started.

"Is that so, Chief?"

"Yessir. No sex-appeal."

"Well, can you tie that!" said the first patrolman. "When I tried to crash the Colossa-Exquisite, they said my voice wasn't right."

"Me," said the second patrolman, eyeing Mr. Schnellenhamer sourly, "they had the nerve to beef at my left profile. Lookut, boys," he said, turning, "can you see anything wrong with that profile?"

His companions studied him closely. The sergeant raised a hand and peered between his fingers, with his head tilted back and his eyes half closed.

"Not a thing," he said.

"Why, Basil it's a lovely profile," said the first patrolman.

"Well, that's how it goes," said the second patrolman, moodily.

The sergeant had returned to his own grievance.

"No sex-appeal!" he said, with a rasping laugh. "And me that had specially taken sex-appeal in the College of Eastern Iowa Course of Motion Picture Acting!"

"Who says my voice ain't right?" demanded the first patrolman. "Listen! Sh-m-m-m-m-m-m!"

"Swell!" said the sergeant.

"Like a nightingale or something," said the second patrolman.

The sergeant flexed his muscles.

"Ready, boys?"

"Kayo, chief."

"Wait!" said Mr Schnellenhamer. "Wait! Give me one more chance. I'm sure I can find parts for you all."

The sergeant shook his head.

"No. It's too late. You've got us mad now. You don't appreciate the sensitiveness of the artist. Does he, boys?"

"You're darned right, he doesn't," said the first patrolman.

"I wouldn't work for the Colossal-Exquisite now," said the second patrolman, with a petulant twitch of his shoulder, "not if they wanted me to play Romeo opposite Lilyan Tashman."

"Then let's go," said the sergeant. "Come along, lady, you show us where this cellar is."

For some moments after the officers of the law preceded by Vera Prebble, had left, nothing was to be heard in the silent sitting-room, but the rhythmic beating of Mr Fishbein's head against the wall and the rustling sound of Mr Zizzbaum rolling round the floor. Mr Schnellenhamer sat brooding with his chin in his hands, merely moving his legs slightly each time Mr Zizzbaum came round. The failure of his diplomatic efforts had stunned him.

A vision rose before his eyes of Mrs. Schnellenhamer waiting in their sunlit patio for his return. As clearly as if he had been there now, he could see her swooning, slipping into the goldfish pond and blowing bubbles with her head beneath the surface. And he was asking himself whether in such an event it would be better to raise her gently or just leave Nature to take its course. She would, he knew, be extremely full of that stormy emotion of which she had once been empress.

It was as he still debated this difficult point that a light step caught his ear. Vera Prebble was standing in the doorway.

"Mr Schnellenhamer."

The magnate waved a weary hand.

"Leave me," he said. "I am thinking."

"I thought you would like to know," said Vera Prebble, "that I've just locked those cops in the coal-cellar."

As in the final reel of a super-super-film eyes brighten and faces light up at the entry of the United States Marines, so at these words did Mr Schnellenhamer, Mr Fishbein, and Mr Zizzbaum perk up as if after a draught of some magic elixir.

"In the coal-cellar?" gasped Mr Schnellenhamer.

"In the coal-cellar."

"Then if we work quick——"

Vera Prebble coughed.

"One moment," she said. "Just one moment. Before you go, I have drawn up a little letter covering our recent agreement. Perhaps you will all three just sign it. Thus," she added, archly, avoiding all rannygazoo.

Mr Schnellenhamer clicked his tongue impatiently.

"No time for that now. Come to my office to-morrow. Where are you going?" he asked, as the girl started to withdraw.

"Just to the coal-cellar," said Vera Prebble. "I think those fellows may want to come out."

Mr Schnellenhamer sighed. It had been worth trying, of course, but he had never really had much hope.

"Gimme," he said, resignedly.

The girl watched as the three men attached their signatures. She took the document and folded it carefully.

"Would any of you like to hear me recite 'The Bells,' by Edgar Allan Poe?" she asked.

"No," said Mr Fishbein.

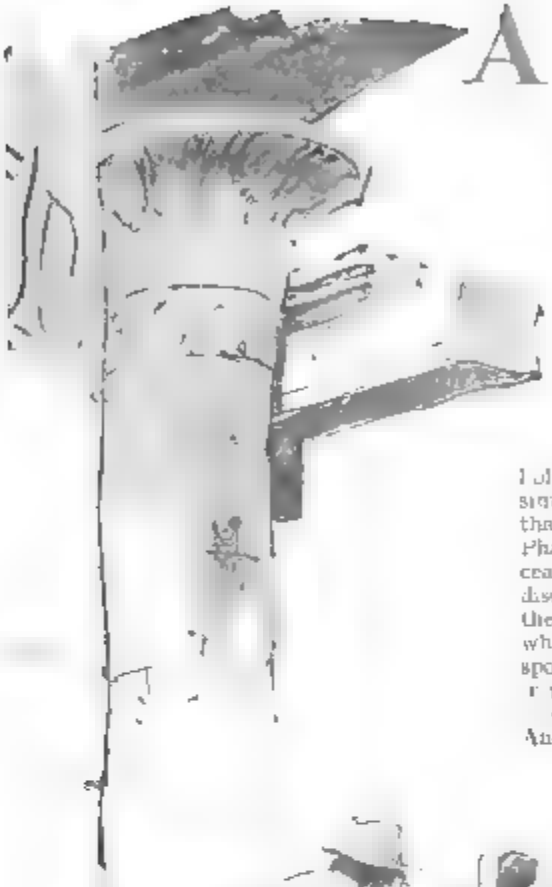
"No," said Mr Zizzbaum.

"No!" said Mr Schnellenhamer. "We have no desire to hear you recite 'The Bells,' Miss Prebble."

The girl's eyes flashed haughtily.

"Miss Nordstrom," she corrected. "And just for that you'll get 'The Charge of the Light Brigade,' and like it."

# A SHORT



EGYPT is a long narrow place, bounded on two sides by the desert. The desert is safe. Egypt is full of Egyptians.

It is a good thing to go to Egypt in the same mood as one goes to the dentist, determined that one is going to be hurt. Then it may not hurt so much. Abandon, at least any idea that you are going to spend a restful and economical holiday in the place. Make up your mind simply that you are a large sponge, and that so long as you are in the land of the Pharaohs never for one instant will you cease to ooze money. On the day you disembark you will form the impression that the people of Egypt have but one idea, which is to pay off a very old score and spoil the Gentiles. You will retain this impression when you crawl, a pauper, on board the homeward-bound steamer at Port Said. And you will be right.

*Illustrated by*
*BERT THOMAS*

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# GUIDE TO EGYPT

## A.P. HERBERT

I would not say that there are *no* Egyptians not after your savings. But the ordinary tourist has little opportunity of meeting them. The thing to do, of course, is to stay with friends in a private house, where the servants are charming, courteous, and attentive, and seem to be quite free of the sponge-complex. In the big hotels, too, they are often endearing and kind, but even there, though ten per cent is added to the bill for 'service' this does not seem to have been communicated to the staff. Nor is it blazoned abroad to the customers. The tongues hang out for tips, as usual; and if there is one thing that annoys the departing traveller more than another it is to distribute tips all round, and then find that he has to pay that ten per cent for service in the bill.

But we cannot all stay in private houses. Nor can one spend a fortnight's holiday cowering in the hotel, though many visitors to Egypt do pass their last few days in this manner. The idea of travel is to move about; and the sad accusation is that moving about in Egypt is a burden, and a bore, and becomes at last a curse. I suppose that at every large port in the world the disembarking traveller is beset by a cluster of men who wish to carry his bag or sell him necklaces, take him for a drive or a ride on a camel, a donkey or a boat. But in Egypt the cluster is an army, a swarm, a cloud; it is everywhere, and it goes on and on for ever.

The simple natives of other lands do at last take "No" for an answer. The Egyptians do not seem to understand the word. Walking about the street one says "No" every five paces, and it has to be said or shouted at least five times to every vendor of necklaces, fly-whisks, and "nice postcards" before it begins to have an effect. One may be waving a fly-whisk with each hand, and still the pertinacious fellows will try to sell you another.

The necklace-seller is at your heels as you walk by the Nile in the early morning, as you watch the sunset, and as you inspect the moon-rise. And he besets the door of your hotel all day. In the end, for the sake of peace, the strongest man will buy a native necklace, which he knows that he could get at Woolworth's, less expensive and more native. As you ride on your donkey to the Tombs of the Kings, the children rush out from the mud-hut villages and cry, "Good morning, *baksheesh!*" The tiniest baby knows at least that word, can murmur "Baksheesh" and hold out a clutching little hand for money.

Looking out from the train upon the fertile Delta you think that you are watching a scene from the Old Testament. The flat fields are full of biblical figures and beasts. There is Abraham on his great white ass, and there are his wives and children about him, his oxen and his camels, his sheep and his goats. But if you were to stop the train and approach the field I have no doubt that Abraham, Esau, Jacob and all would do what they could to get your money.

Near Luxor I left the car to take a photograph of a typical Egyptian agricultural scene. One of the ancient water-wheels in the foreground, the patient water-buffalo trudging endlessly round it, the wide field full of men, women and children busily gathering in the crop, a string of camels stalking along the road beyond, donkeys almost invisible under their loads of grass, camels and oxen grazing or resting, babies and dogs and young donkeys playing, and a bearded man making monotonous music for them all with a strange instrument like a one-stringed fiddle of which the foundation was a coco-nut shell. I opened my camera to record the industrious scene, thinking "Here is the real heart and life of the people." Instantly the industrious

*"I saw fine sights, and loved the sun, and enjoyed myself, but——" Mr. A. P. Herbert in camp close to the Pyramids.*

scene dissolved. Every man, woman, and child abandoned their labours and, led by the music-maker, rushed at me, crying, Baksheesh!" In the rear a camel gave tongue, and an ass brayed, and I have no doubt that what they said was Baksheesh.

The acquisition of foreign funds does seem to have become a national movement. The word "*baksheesh*," mark you, means not money simply, but *pourboire*, something for nothing. That is the suggestion, that the people of Egypt are entitled to your money, not for services rendered, but as of right. It is a form of vengeance, I suppose, for the many invasions of the country, but it seems hard on the Americans.

You must count your change, as you would count your jewels. Every time. Which is a bore. For the coinage of Egypt is maddening, and full of opportunities for error, being based upon the absurd *piastre*, which is worth 2½d. And, to make it easy, some *piastres* are larger than a shilling, with a hole in the middle, and some are as small as a sixpence with no hole in the middle. And by the time you have collected the right coins for a taxi, it has ticked up another *piastre* or two.

Moreover, the country is littered with bad coins. Every shop-counter, ticket-office, and receipt of custom has a marble slab, and every silver coin which passes is flung upon the marble slab, to test its ring. Where there is no marble slab you wander about and look for a stone. It is somewhat humiliating, when you have given an Arab a lordly tip of two shillings, to see him fling it suspiciously on the pavement, or poke about the desert in search of a rock. I see that marble slab as the lamentable symbol, the discreditable monument of the Land of the Pharaohs, 1933.

Hard words. I mean them to be hard. And (at the risk of offending all my pleasant Egyptian friends) I hope that these hard words will be shouted in the ears of someone in authority. They are not merely the usual irritable plaint of the traveller who has spent more money than he intended. One is always prepared to spend more money than one intended. No, this is a material grievance, and must be removed if Egypt wants us to continue and increase our patronage (as she tells me she does). All this badgering and brigandage is really

more than the most long-suffering traveller should be expected to endure in a country reputed to be civilized, and it does so seriously detract from the pleasures of a visit to the country that I should seriously weigh it in the balance if I were to contemplate another visit

You may tell Egypt from me that there are many other places full of sun and monuments, places where the traveller, though a European or American, may call his soul, and a fair share of his money his own. And most of them are much more beautiful than Egypt. Egypt must civilize herself if she wants to draw the civilized world. It is absurd to say that where you have a continual stream of 'tourists' flowing into a static population of 'natives' this kind of nuisance is inevitable. It is no more inevitable than bad drainage or a dirty face. A Mussolini could make Egypt safe for the "tourist" in a very short time. It is not inevitable, for example, that *three* porters should snatch hold of every suit-case and snarl like wild animals at the traveller if they are not all rewarded. A little staff-work and discipline is surely not too much to expect at the railway station of the great city of Cairo. But authority seems to be drugged with complacency or fatalism. The resident Europeans have their native butlers and so forth, who look after their baggage and protect them from the rabble. I believe them to be quite as incapable of looking after themselves as the despised 'tourist' and in any case his troubles do not concern them.

The Government is busy enough exploiting its Temples and Tombs, but seems to do nothing about the Marble Slab. And the Government itself is knee-deep in the business of fleecing the stranger within its gates. Nothing could be more vigorous than the kick in the pants which Egypt administers to the parting guest. It cost me twenty-five shillings to get my wife and myself and a few pieces of luggage from the station at Port Said on to the liner, about a quarter of a mile away. Some of this tribute was rendered to the Government for 'quarantine services' (a man, without looking at us, wrote our names on a pink form and charged us six shillings for it); some to the railway for conveying our luggage to the Customs (three sous to porters for doing the same thing ("Do not pay the porters"), and

*A happy snapshot of Mr A. P. Herbert when he seemed to have forgotten for a moment the "rapacious rabble and the tortuous but boring dragoman"*

some to Cook's man for protecting us from further robbery and seeing the luggage on to the ship. All this in England would have cost five shillings and taken half the time.

Well, Egypt, I like your sun, you have some fine sights and pleasant people, but really at present you are not worth the trouble and expense. I propose to give you a bad Press until I hear that you have reformed, and I hope that the Editor of this magazine will send a marked copy to King Fuad, Sulky Pasha, the High Commissioner, the Ministry of the Interior, the railway companies, and the police.

THIS brings me to "Johnny Achmet," who weighs heavy on my soul. And this trouble proceeds directly from the troubles mentioned above. The technique of comfortable living in Egypt as the resident Europeans have discovered it is to employ a native to deal with the other natives. The tourist employs a "dragoman." The dragoman's ostensible but minor function is to guide you to the right Tombs and Temples and tell you the tale about them; his real business is to protect you from robbery, to hire your donkeys, camels, and boats for you, and drive the sellers of necklaces away. I have always hated guides. I like to choose my own sights and regard them in silence. But such was the press of porters, yelling like wild beasts on the Luxor platform, that when "Johnny" Achmet presented himself we were glad to deliver ourselves into his care.

He told us at once that he was "very good man." He looked good, was good-looking and well-dressed in a long blue robe and clean turban (the right names for which I forget). He had large brown dog-like eyes, good English, and a soft and cultivated voice—a pleasant change from the raucous cries of the rabble.

And, Lord, how I grew to loathe that voice!

The first day (because of our night journey) Johnny let us off lightly, and we did "nothing" but the Temple of Luxor after tea. Between chunks of dreary information about the various kings called Rameses, "Johnny" told us repeatedly that he was "very good man" and used very severe language concerning the rapacity of the rest of his countrymen. He told us plainly that from him we had nothing to fear; that our sojourn at Luxor would beat all records for cheapness. He showed us many letters of commendation from English and American clients. He loved the English. An English artist had employed him for several years for months. This Englishman had been "very good by" Johnny helped him with his English, and paid him well. Now he was in England but wrote to Johnny often, and Johnny sent him something for Christmas always, and said a piece from the Koran for him every night, because the Englishman had been good by him. Tears stood in my eyes at the end of this recital, and I made a vow in my heart to do what I could to live up to the standard of the kind Englishman.

'Johnny' had timed his reminiscence well. The afternoon was hot, and I was already growing rather restive about sightseeing. That is to say I was glad to see the Temple of Rameses I, II or III? (I forget). Like other ruined temples, it is fine and impressive, but is not really a very great wonder unless you imagine the parts which are not there. And to do that you should sit quiet and contemplative and gaze at the thing. I did not want to trudge from corner to corner while Johnny explained in detail the meaning of every faint trace of carving on the walls, though when they were painted and clear they must have been very fine. I had already inspected dutifully two very spacious walls, and the fragments of many statues, and already I felt that I *knew* Egyptian mythology—as much, at least, as was necessary. The Ancient Egyptians may have been great men and clever artists, but they tended to repeat themselves. When he has seen one Temple wall the layman has very nearly seen them all. There is always Isis, the god of something or other, presenting to Osiris, the god of the Underworld (?). King Rameses or Tittup or What-not. Or King What-is-it is triumphing over his enemies, with the god Thoth, or the goddess Mutt, in the background; slaves are having their heads cut to pieces, somebody is travelling in the Sacred Boat, and there are cobras everywhere, not to mention Amen-ra Lord of Thebes, the goddesses Pith and Tooth and dear old Anubis, who looks like a cross between a wolf, a dog, a jackal and a very savage hare. I was already weary of Thoth and Pith, and I did not care what dynasty which Rameses belonged to. No layman can remember for more than ten seconds which dynasty was which, and if he is honest he does not care. When I get into the 1600's B.C. I worry very little about the accurate dates; between two or three hundred years is good enough for me. But Johnny Achmet thought I wanted to hear not only the name and number but the date and dynasty of every Rameses he found on a wall, no matter how many times he found the same one.

So I had determined to sit quiet on a stone and imagine the parts of the Temple which are not there, also to watch a most

attractive hoopoe bird, which was grubbing busily with its immense beak in the grass of the courtyard. (I fear that almost any bird or beast can distract my attention from a ruined Temple, however ancient.) But after "Johnny's" lectures about the kind Englishman I had not the heart to displease him. Meekly I followed into the great Court of the Temple, and the dreary recitations from Baedeker began again. "King Tittup II, 18th dynasty, 1600 B.C.

Osiris God of the Underworld . . . the God Thoth . . the God Pith . . 17th dynasty . . the Goddess Mutt. . ."

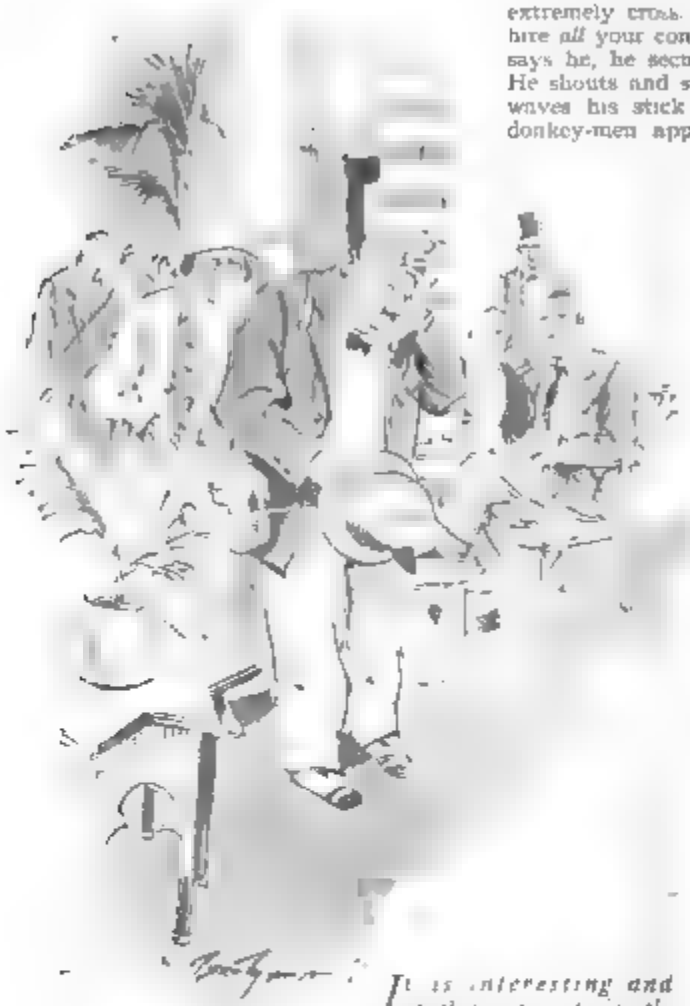
This went on for five days. We crossed the Nile in the great heat and rode to the Valley of the Queens on energetic asses. We also "did" the Valley of the Kings. Now the Kings of Egypt were remarkable men. The wall paintings in their tombs are fascinating and wonderful. I could have spent a long time gazing upon them in respectful silence. But 'Johnny' insisted on droning his dates and dynasties at us, and we rushed screaming to the next tomb, anxious only to escape to the hotel. Once, in our eagerness, we nearly missed Tutankhamen's tomb. A dragoman, I believe, could make Niagara dull.

You think I might have snapped "Shut up" or murmured 'Be silent.' You did not see those large brown, reproachful eyes you have forgotten about the good Englishman.

It is interesting and pathetic to sit in the lounge of the hotel and watch the 'tourists' totter back from seeing tombs and things. They sigh with relief. They have shaken off their dragoman. Till next day they are free.

Well, not exactly free. For he is watching the door, and though you may be off duty for tombs and things, you cannot get out for a quiet stroll without him. You take a dragoman not as you take a wife, but as a

*The simple natives of other lands do at last take "No" for an answer. The Egyptians do not seem to understand the word.*



*It is interesting and pathetic to sit in the lounge of the hotel and watch the "tourists" totter back from seeing tombs and things*

extremely cross. For the dragoman must hire *all* your conveyances for you because, says he, he secures such favourable rates. He shouts and storms at their owners and waves his stick and the boat-men and donkey-men appear to be extremely discontented. But there is a whispered suspicion that he receives a commission from them; and he charges you fifty piastres a day for taking you about and saving you money. Also, when I came to study "Johnny's" bill I found that, unaided, I had secured the same rate from the boatman as "Johnny" did. So that the economy of a dragoman is perhaps exaggerated.

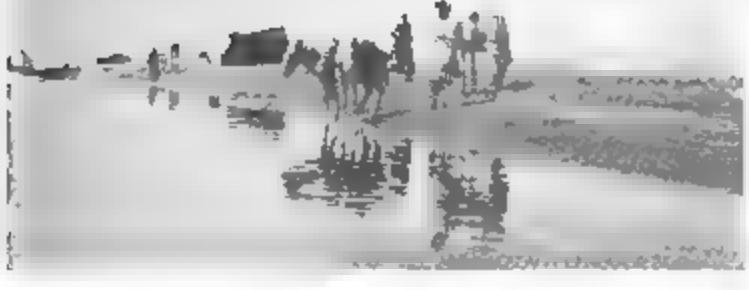
After that, Heaven forgive us, we took to telling lies to the good fellow. We would tell him we were staying indoors after dinner and then sneak out and wickedly hire a carriage by ourselves, or even stroll about the town but guiltily looking about us and expecting every minute to hear that smooth and virtuous voice. "Johnny Achmet good man. Lady and gentleman must not walk without Johnny."

Always that smooth and virtuous voice. I began to wish that we had hired some ruffianous rogue to whom one could be rude. I could not be rude to Johnny. He clung to us to the end. I could not dismiss him, so we left Luxor two days before we had intended. He saw us off. I wrote things in his book. He is going to send me something for Christmas. He stood for ten minutes on the platform, and droned at me about his virtues, about the wickedness of other Egyptians and the money he had saved me. I listened, saying Um and I know' in an agony of irritation. The mistress. He pervades your whole existence. He has taken over your life until you leave the town, and you are not supposed to be capable of movement or enjoyment without his expert aid. If you venture to carry a book it is politely but firmly taken from your hand. Once when we had sent Johnny shopping I slipped out here, a boat and had a swim on my own. When I left the boat happy at last Johnny was standing on the bank of the Nile and there was more than reproach in the dark dog-like eyes. The dark dog-like eyes were

train would not go. I thought I should go mad. The dog-like eyes were full of devotion. I showered thanks and praises on him and wanted to strike him. No virtuous man has ever made me feel so mean and so murderous. At last the train moved off, while we were still exchanging thanks and addresses and protestations of eternal affection. We waved and "Johnny" waved. At last the dog-like eyes were out of sight and I sank exhausted on to my seat, not thinking. Luxor! I have seen Luxor—the Tombs, the Temples, the Desert, the Nile—but "God be praised!—I shall never see Johnny Achmet again!'

Brute. Brute that I am! But never mind—I have made good—I have kept the flag flying. "Johnny" is going to send me something for Christmas.

A Guide to Egypt? "I hear you say, indignant y. "Where is the Guide? What about the Pyramids? Is that all you know?' Well, to be frank, that is almost all that is fixed in my mind. And that will show you perhaps, how serious is the state of Egypt. No man can help his impressions. I went to Egypt with good will in my heart, and my impressions are recorded above. I was hospitably and nobly treated by many persons both European and Egyptian, and I remember many of them with gratitude and affection. I saw fine sights, and loved the sun and enjoyed myself. But I cannot help it—all the kind people, all the fine sights, all the sunshine, all the Pyramids, all the feluccas and camels and Tombs, are really I find, in the background of my honest recollections of Egypt. And monstrous in the foreground are the two subjects of this discourse, the rapacious rabble and the virtuous but boring dragoman. That is the Egypt which is stamped upon my mind. And if I have to choose again between the same devil and the same deep sea, I do not want to visit Egypt again. And therefore do I hope that these tentative comments will be respectfully communicated to King Fuad, Sidky Pasha, the Ministry of the Interior, the High Commissioner, the railway authorities, and the police. Or, better still, to some Egyptian Mussolini, who has not yet emerged.



# MONEY'S WORTH

By G. B. STERN

*Illustrated by JOHN PIMLOTT*

BARTHOLOMEW BASSETT must have been still in his twenties when he began to be plump, rosy, and benevolent with beaming blue eyes set in a web of tiny wrinkles, and hair that was already beginning to recede from his temples. Seeing this, his father the head of the firm of Bassett and Molton, at once made him a partner.

The firm of Bassett and Molton had its premises in one of the best streets in London and dealt in the finest leatherwork of all kinds. Before old Mr Bassett and old Mr Molton died, their goods had a heavy bias towards luggage that would last for a lifetime of Grand Tours, but young Mr Bart—so named by the hypnotized *employés*, exactly as though he were a character in Victorian fiction—was modern enough in his methods gradually to bring his wares into line with a twentieth-century demand for more elegant traveling-cases, that need not necessarily endure for three score years and ten, handbags, pouches, car cushions, pocket books, fitted dressing cases, exquisite shoes, even the softest and most supple leather coats. A pug and a crocodile and an alligator and a gazelle, strolling arm-in-arm through the shop, would have found the greatest difficulty in recognizing their as-was-my-poor-brothers with such tender and sensitive imagination had these brothers been transformed into *marroquinerie*.

It was extremely tantalizing not to be rich when you paused outside the windows of Bassett and Molton. Bassett and Molton's customers were indeed all extravagant, easy-going people, who were accustomed to order the very best of everything, and discriminating enough to appreciate the quality of the firm's stamp.

The only thing that was deplorably modern about the customers at Bassett and Molton's was the fact that they were nonchalant, too nonchalant, over settling their accounts.

And they became more and more nonchalant until, about a week before a certain Christmas, when Bartholomew Bassett had at last caught up with his own appearance and personality, and was, in years as well, a delightful old gentleman of sixty-eight, he had to face the fact that a considerable amount of money, in small sums, was so overdue that there seemed very little hope of ever recovering it. This two thousand pounds odd was apart from the usual running debts which caused no anxiety because they were certain to be paid in time, it consisted of really bad casual debts, for which the firm had sent out application after application, with no result. These applications certainly were worded, by Bartholomew's special orders, so that they resembled rather more the salutations to be found on particularly loving Valentines, than furious and strident demands for money. But even then, with any belief in human nature.

But that was where Bartholomew's head accountant differed from Bartholomew himself.

They had a long and very painful interview. The head accountant told his chief

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respectfully but firmly, that these debts definitely should be collected by the end of the year, for the sake of the firm's self-respect. Would he not allow them to do something more drastic about them?

'What do you suggest, Mr. Clarke?'

Mr. Clarke suggested, not without trepidation knowing what prejudices he assaulted, that a solicitor's letter nearly always had more effect than a letter from the firm itself.

'It isn't exactly the money, sir. It's a question of balancing our books for the year. We weren't able to last year, because a lot of these amounts were already owing then, and you told me to let them slide.'

'I didn't!' cried Bartholomew Bassett defiantly. 'I'm sure I didn't use the word slide. What I said was: Let 'em stand over for a bit, Clarke. These people, poor devils, will pay when they can. Human nature is fundamentally honest, Clarke, and until they can, it's a shame to squeeze 'em.' You can't run the world without idealism, and you can't run a leather goods establishment without idealism, and that's sound argument!'

'Yes, Mr. Bassett. Then have I your permission to have the money collected by Cork, Trappett, Dobden and Cork? It would really be out of our hands then, and there'd be no need for you to be—to be—er—pained by the—to—er—feeling any pain about it personally,' added William Clarke, not without a touch of dryness.

Bartholomew Bassett sat for a moment in deep reflection, without replying.

'I don't like all this bullying and bludgeoning,' he said at last.

*Clare dismally turned out the accumulated rubbish from her chest of drawers, letting the contents sprawl on the carpet round her*

Bullying and bludgeoning, Mr Bassett?' William Clarke was shocked.

'No, Clarke, no! I won't threaten. I won't send out summonses. I have my creed, and you have yours. You're a cynic and a sceptic.'

His head accountant was nothing of the sort—merely a mild man with a sense of precision and accuracy.

'Anyhow,' Mr Bassett added, 'I have a plan of my own.'

William Clarke tried to look as though he had an almost religious confidence in almost any plan of Mr Bassett's. But his soul quaked in apprehension.

A few weeks earlier Mr Bassett had been left a legacy, a small private legacy which, by Dickensian coincidence, when Death Duties had been paid, added up to slightly over two thousand pounds. And the idea had shot into his head—a head which disrespectful nephews in the olden days would not have hesitated to call a noddle—that he might use this two thousand pounds (not a very large sum to him, for he was a wealthy man) to test his theory of the innate decency of human nature. 'If they can pay, they will.' That was his creed. But he had been genuinely bothered for years now by the wave of bitterness and pessimism washing through the world. It might be the War or it might be something vaguely called the modern spirit. Whatever it was, he was prepared to challenge it. Above all things, he desired to set his mind at rest, and his legacy would be well laid out if he could use it to buy himself peace and reassurance.

Nevertheless, he was by no means prepared to lose his legacy merely to sink it into the firm. He was not in a hurry, but pondered over his plan all through Christmas, only to become more and more enamoured of it. It was imaginative, inspired, sensible, economic, generous, and thrifty all at the same time, and what more virtues could be found in a plan than these?

When he returned to his office on the twenty-seventh of December he shut himself up with a list of his pathetically obstinate debtors, and with rich Dickensian chuckles, directed obliquely at his head accountant, wrote out a cheque for each one of them, of exactly the amount they owed him. Then to each one of them he wrote a letter, sending his best wishes for the New Year, and merely remarking that a cheque was enclosed for the amount they owed Bassett and Morton.

Bartholomew Bassett, when he had secretly posted his pack of letters, let himself loose in a golden dream. All these harassed, careworn people! At first they would look at the epistle with dread. Bassett and Morton? on the envelope?—yet another demand for the money they had not got! Then they would open it. And then—

He imagined the whole two thousand pounds, which he had wilfully broken up into little fragments, rolling together again, a complete jig-saw. In a few days' time he would be able to hand over two thousand pounds in small cheques to William Clarke, informing him briefly that these people had paid.

'Mind you,' cried Bartholomew in anticipation, pointing a triumphant forefinger, 'mind you, Clarke, I was careful not to say in my letters that I expected them to use the money I sent them, to pay me back. I only said: "A cheque is enclosed for the amount you owe us." I left the implication entirely to them. And what's the result? Two thousand pounds went out, and two thousand pounds have come back. So who was the best accountant in the end, you or I, Clarke? You or I?'

ON a dismal blowy afternoon towards the end of March Clare Arundel sat on the floor in her dismal bedroom in a Bayswater boarding-house, dismally turning out the accumulated rubbish from her chest of drawers, and leaving the contents to sprawl on the carpet round her. One stage of her life had reached a dead end, so that it seemed to her that her present occupation reflected appropriately on the spiritual situation.

If only she could have gone out of Donald's life with *panache*. If she could have made a final spirited gesture, and, so to speak, flung a cavalier cloak and cocked the feather in her hat, then she would have minded less—in fact, it was doubtful whether she would have been clearing out those old drawers at all.

For Clare's religion was gesture—not only superficially, but from the very soul.

Supposing, for instance, you are fond of a man, and a man is fond of you, and there is just no doubt about it. At all, and supposing, then, owing a great deal to his obstinacy and a little, perhaps, to your own light-hearted independence, you quarrel with him and dismiss him, and he goes, and a couple of months later gets engaged to somebody else—somebody rich and not bad-looking and boring, called Camilla—and you receive an invitation to their wedding, a very grand wedding, then there is only one obvious gesture to satisfy the soul. You must send an excellent present, fastidiously chosen; you must wear excellent clothes reflecting the bridal spirit, and, of course, showing up your own best points. You must hold your

head high, and go to the wedding, and be seen, not caring a damn

If you do none of these things, because you are too hard up—only because you are too achingly hard up, no other reason because Don himself had ceased to count, ages ago—then all your friends, and all Don's friends will think you are crouching somewhere, heartbroken and resentful and Camilla will think so, too, and Camilla's mother and Don's mother and Don's awful sisters, and most distasteful of all Donald Mansfield himself the happy bridegroom

Poor Clare! he'll think, laughing as he changes into his going-away suit, light grey, with a stripe running through it. "Poor Clare!"

I won't be thought pathetic, when I'm not! But I can't turn up at the church looking shabby, because that's even worse than not turning up at all and both are bad. . . A forlorn little figure trying to wear a brave face above her twice-turned and pressed little blue serge coat and skirt was among the last of the guests to creep in hoping to remain unobserved, because of the tear-stains marring her fair, sad little countenance. . . *No!*" exclaimed Clare, springing up and recklessly overturning the last and most alarmingly jammed crowded and tumbled drawer of all "I might as well get all this mess tidy and start life all over again. Damn being hard up! Why, I'd have enjoyed the wedding. I *like* weddings, they're so jolly!

But even if any of her clothes had been fit to put on, she had not been able to scrape together either credit or cash to purchase a first-class wedding present for Camilla. Her allowance was overdrawn also the commission she earned on top of her absurdly small salary at a friend's hat-and-necklace shop in South Molton Street. In fact, her present financial condition looked like a dish of badly-scrambled eggs. How divine to have a regular income, whole and pearly and not owe money all round, with I.O.U's and post-dated cheques scattered in a sort of desperate largesse among her creditors

And my birthday isn't for *years*," murmured Clare a trifle inaccurate in her despair sending a wry glance in the direction of her sole surviving relation, Uncle Ralph of the Hard Fist, who firmly when approached with the idea of getting her next three birthday presents rolled into one [illegible]—and then I needn't bother you any more, you see! had replied that she'd need her birthday present even more when the late came round than she did now, and was going to be half its usual size because times were hard, and couldn't young women ever realise that times were hard, or hadn't they the brains to realise anything but their own pleasure and gadding about?

Summing up her predicament, moral and spiritual Clare decided on repentance and a clean sponge-out of the past. So when she discovered a bundle of scrabbled-up and unwholesome-looking bills, threats and demands for money shoved to the back of this particular drawer, she bravely faced them smoothing them out one by one, reading the contents, and saying "Ah!" or "Oh!" or even "Dear me!" at frequent intervals

SOME of the envelopes were not even opened, for the name of the firm printed on the outside had told her guilty conscience all that she wished to know of their contents. But she opened them now, courageously resolved on hearing the worst about herself

One of them three months old with "Bassett and Molton" marked on the outside, contained a cheque, as well as a letter

"It can't be true!" said Clare

It's a dream

Or I'm in heaven. Yes, that's it—I'm in heaven."

But she looked round the room, which was not in the least like heaven. Then she read the cheque which was for seventeen pounds two shillings and eightpence—the sum seemed somehow familiar. And then finally she read the letter signed "Bartholomew Bassett"

Her hopes fell as she read. The sum of seventeen pounds two shillings and eightpence was not a gift, sent by fortune at the eleventh hour to lift her over her difficulty connected with Don's wedding. It was, apparently the exact amount that she had owed Bassett and Molton—oh, for ages—without bothering about it much, because they had bothered her so much less than other firms. And, fantastic though it might appear, Mr Bartholomew Bassett had sent it to her so that she might send it back to him in payment of her debt. He did not actually say so, but it was crystal clear to Clare that this was what he meant. "I ought to have done it at once. Oh, damn, what must he be thinking of me all this time? . . December the thirty-first? Then I ought to have opened it on New Year's Day

Her cheeks grew hot as it occurred to her that what Mr Bartholomew Bassett undoubtedly an eccentric tradesman must be thinking of her was that she had hung on to the money, and spent it

Oh God! But how could I have known? He ought to have written on the envelope "There's money inside." Then I'd have had it open like a wolf tearing out a lamb"

Sitting cross-legged among her litter of worldly possessions, she pondered on this

dilemma. Then impulsively sprang up, jammed on her hat, and hurled herself on to a bus. She had better explain in person to Mr Bartholomew Bassett why her behaviour had appeared unscrupulous over this cheque.

"Because I'm not in the least an unscrupulous person," she gabbled, breathlessly, to the stern old gentleman who had received her, at her special plea, in his private office. Thank Heaven he was old, at any rate, for now she could tell him all about Don and Camilla—oh, and everything. Don's awful sisters, and what Camilla's mother would be thinking— 'And naturally I'd have been a fool not to see why you sent me just seventeen pounds, two shillings and eightpence. I'm terribly sorry, by the way, that I hadn't been able to pay it before, but times have been hard—you must realize that. It was such a kind thought of yours, and you must have been thinking me just one of those dishonest cads who grab what they can and hang on to it."

"Not you particularly," said Mr Bartholomew Bassett, with bitterness.

Oh, wasn't I the only one, then? with relief. "Oh, I *am* glad, in a way, because when I opened your letter I thought

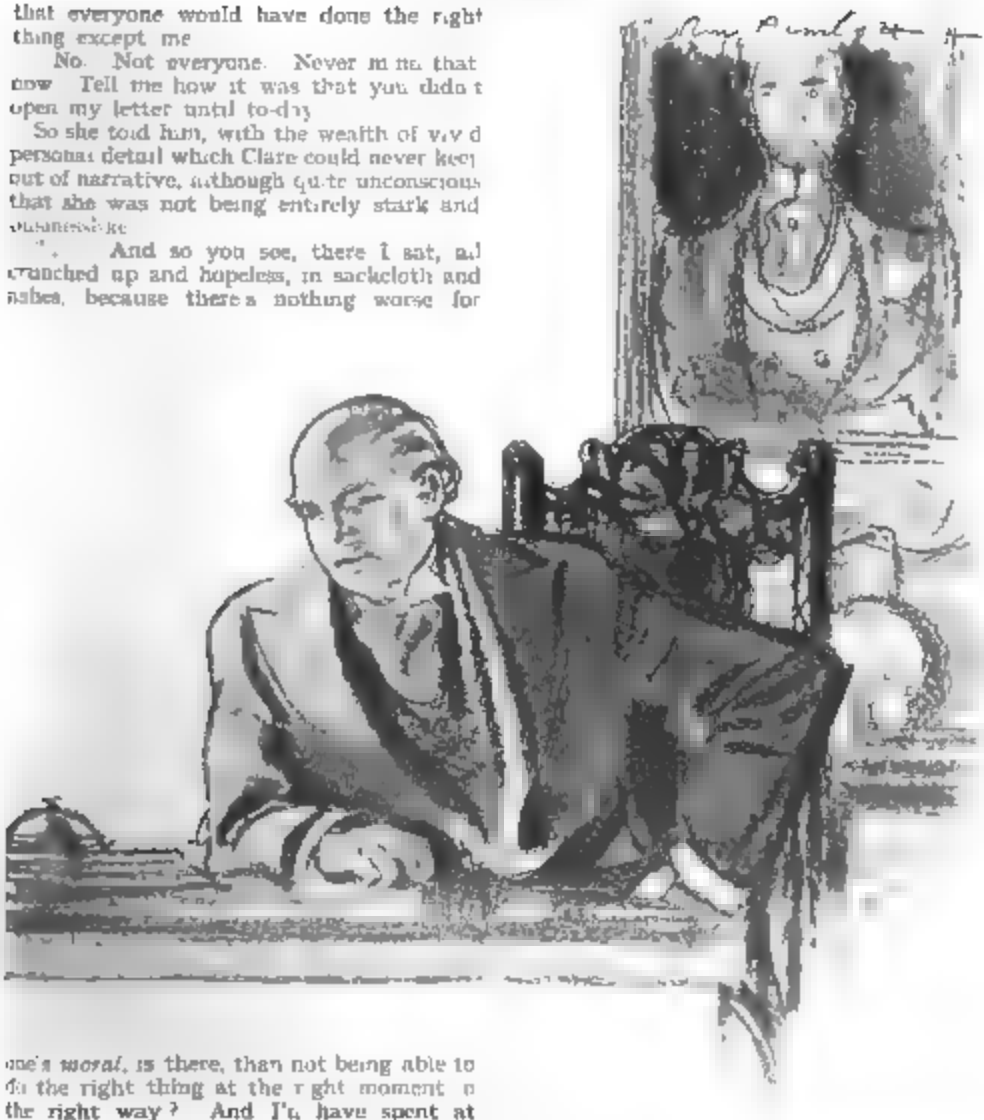
*"Do you consider it altogether scrupulous, my dear young lady," said Mr Bassett, "to come here month after month buying articles for which you have no means of paying?"*

that everyone would have done the right thing except me

No. Not everyone. Never mind that now. Tell me how it was that you didn't open my letter until to-day.

So she told him, with the wealth of vivid personal detail which Clare could never keep out of narrative, although quite unconscious that she was not being entirely stark and businesslike:

". . . And so you see, there I sat, all crunched up and hopeless, in sackcloth and ashes, because there's nothing worse for



one's *moral*, is there, than not being able to do the right thing at the right moment in the right way? And I'd have spent at least—well, shall we say seven pounds on Camilla's wedding present . . . and that would have left ten pounds, two and eightpence for some sort of a rig-out to wear at the wedding. I could have paid that much down, anyhow, and chanced the rest.

But," put in the head of the firm of Bassett and Molton with peculiar precision in his tone, "I gather that you had not got, shall we say, seventeen pounds, two and eightpence?"

"Not until I happened to open your letter, and found your cheque."

I gathered—forgive me if I'm wrong—that you looked on that money as essentially intended by me to repay what you owed to the firm?"

"Look here," Clare admitted, frankly, "I told you I was scrupulous, and so I am, but I'm not a saint, and I can't help being tempted. It *did* look as though that money had arrived just when I most needed it, and at a crisis of my life. And I *did* think that in a way there was just a hope that you might see that, whoever you were. Only I simply couldn't borrow it, could I, without talking it over with you first? Because, just for the moment I'm not quite sure what's providence and what's you, and which I ought to listen to. So what would *you* do?" Clare finished, earnestly gazing at him, and sincerely believing that she

would get an unbiased solution to her problem.

The rosy old gentleman with the round face and the incongruously brooding eyes, could not help smiling at the girl. She was so very attractive, slim and tall, and far as a boy of ancient Greece, and so very serious in her confidence, and so hopelessly wrong in all her ethical conclusions. Still, she had, after all, brought him the cheque the minute she had found it. She had a curious sense of honesty lop-sided certainly, and with two or three expediently set exits and entrances. But since the result of his experiment, early in the New Year, Bartholomew Bassett had come to value honesty in whatever odd shape it chose to present itself.

"So you expect me to hand you back this cheque, with my blessing?"

"That's awful, when you put it like that. I only wondered if that's all, if you could possibly be brought to see that I could possibly have been justified in not using it to pay my bill with you—to settle my account, I mean. You don't like it called bills, do you, when you're a very old-established firm? I've noticed that."

Mr. Bassett chuckled, then quickly frowned again. "When you boast that you have a scrupulous nature—I think that was the phrase you used—and setting aside for the moment the question of this cheque, do you consider it altogether scrupulous, my dear young lady, to come here month after month, buying articles for which you have no means of paying?"

Inwardly intimidated, but outwardly still fearless, Clare replied, though not cheekily, because he was such an old gentleman. "Do you consider it altogether chivalrous to tackle me about that when I've come round to ask your advice about this?"

"No. No, I don't. That's a fair thrust. But I'll have my answer all the same. I'm not going to lose my faith in human nature without at least learning a bit about it in return."

"Oh!" cried Clare, terribly distressed. "Have I made you lose your faith in human nature? What am I to do? But haven't you lost it rather easily?"

"You're not the only one." Without being aware of it, he had been longing to confide in someone, and he confided now in Clare Arundel, telling her the whole story of the experiment which, on the whole, had not been a great success. Some of the creditors had been very indignant at his presumption, and had torn up the cheques and sent back the pieces. Some had just kept the money and used it; he had not heard from them. Some, perhaps (he gathered from examination of his pass-book), had thrown away the letters without opening them, and a few—and he deemed these the worst and meanest—had used a little of the money to pay Bassett and Molton something on account (doubtless to keep them quiet) and had kept the rest for themselves. A few, again, heartrendingly few, had returned the cheque haughtily companioned by their own cheque for the same amount ("Yes, but they might have done that sooner!").

And about one-fifth of the company had done as Mr. Bassett had intended them to do, whether in shame or in pure relief he could not tell, and had used the money he sent them to wipe off their accounts with Bassett and Molton.

Nevertheless, the total result of the scheme had been undoubtedly a disappointment, and an idealist's fanatical dream of the whole unbroken two thousand pounds rolling out and then rolling back to him without exception, restoring his sturdy faith in fundamental honesty that had been revealed as something so silly and grotesque that he could not even find a name for it. "I expect," Mr. Bassett finished ruefully, "that no one in the wide world except myself could have been such an old idiot."

CLARE was on fire with sympathy, and eager to apply balm and ointment to the soreness of his soul. "I'm just the same sort of idiot, because I'd been absolutely sure when you told me that you'd done it to everyone, that everyone except me had done the right thing. And please don't imagine that I didn't feel an awful criminal when I suggested using your money for wedding presents and things, because I did. Only there are times when I simply have to be a criminal, or I can't get on at all!"

Refreshed and amused by her attitude, Bartholomew Bassett nevertheless returned to his old attack. "Then do you feel a criminal every time you order something that you know you can't pay for, here or at other shops?"

"Oh, no!" Clare argued, intensely surprised, "because while I'm ordering it I always feel sure I'll be able to pay when the time comes, unless I have bad luck. And I'm not extravagant. I only order shoes and handbags and suitcases when I simply have to have them."

Gravely he asked her whether in that mood, it appeared to her as grossly unfair that he, symbolizing Bassett and Molton, should have shoes and handbags and suitcases, and she not have them?

Clare at once fell into the trap, and very

*"Clare, sweet," said Don, "have you nearly finished that immense three-volume letter? We haven't come here only to write to Uncle Bart, you know"*

handsomely granted him that he could not help this unequal arrangement, but, yes, that was what she did feel.

'Then when we—symbolizing the whole of Bond Street—send in our accounts from time to time, you are naturally resentful? We are rude and curt and inconsiderate?'

Clare's eyes began to twinkle. 'You don't mean to be. I'm sure.'

'Thank you. But you *do* feel resentful?'

'Well . . . One does so hate paying for anything when one's not wearing it any more, and it's worn out. Or else you got it as a present for some dud you've stopped liking. And I'm afraid there's no way one can be reminded to pay without feeling resentful. If you're asked courteously, you think they're being sarcastic—and if they're terse, you damn well won't be spoken to like that!'

'I understand.'

And he actually did understand. Understood also her point of view about *panache* and ending an affair in style, and the vital necessity of sending Camilla a really good wedding present—a present that should, moreover, have an air of breeding about it, as though the sender were accustomed to do no less, whatever the circumstances. It had to be the sort of present, too, which would make it absolutely clear to Don that she didn't care a fish-slice whom he married.

"Of course you don't." Mr Bartholomew Bassett shouted his dislike of any flat-footed, swelled-headed young man who was capable of preferring a Camilla to a Clare.

And they settled down chubbily to a discussion of the present, and of the outfit in which she must appear at the wedding. Bassett and Morton could supply the present, certainly, and perhaps a good part of her finery. "Finery," was Mr Bassett's word, and Clare smiled and thought him a prehistoric darling. She wished for something with a delicate swagger about it, and they decided on one of those simple expensive suits in leaf-green suède, that had just come in with the spring season. A gay little pull-on hat in the same suède, with an impudent tilt of the brim, and a bright sun-yellow crêpe-de-Chine handkerchief worn as a scarf, and she would look the least pathetic wedding-guest in the world.

Bartholomew Bassett became more and more of a Dickens grandfather as he supervised each detail—and reminded her that it would be an honour and a pleasure if she would allow him to provide the appropriate shoes, but stockings, alas, were not in the repertoire of a *maroquinerie* so that he could not supply them for nothing—Clare had the usual quaint notion of her uneconomic type that things out of your own shop cost you nothing—but if she would allow an old friend (for by now, indeed, he assumed that he was her old friend and her Uncle Bart and all the rest of it!) to anticipate her birthday—yes, a dozen pairs, mist-coloured not too colwebby—they both agreed in preferring a thick soft mesh of silk that crunched up with a subtle tingling feel in the palm of your hand.

Then they went downstairs to choose Camilla's wedding present, a fountain pen and seal in jade and platinum, in a luxurious jade-green leather case to be stamped with the monogram C M.

Clare, being a more than usually articulate person, was able to express her gratitude and the wild relief in her heart. Bartholomew Bassett, in reply courteously thanked her for returning him his cheque, and reminded her that she was pledged to lunch with him in a week's time, the day after the wedding, and gladden him with her account of it. Then he sent her home in his car.

Returning to his office after seeing her off, he passed Mr William Clarke on the stairs. Mr William Clarke did not know what he had done to deserve that curious little nod of greeting, sly, triumphant, gay from his employer.

DONALD wanted Clare to come with him for a stroll after dinner, but she insisted that before anything else she must write a long letter to explain matters to her Uncle Bart. So she went upstairs to the bedroom and smiled with lazy happiness at the fire which flickered and leaped in the grate, suddenly illuminating the prim mottoes and proverbs that the conscientious host of the little Northern hotel had had lightly carved on every available piece of woodwork.

'There's no smoke without a fire', 'warming y'round the hearth', 'Hot love is soon cold.' over the door to the bathroom. 'A merry heart goes all the way,' on the wardrobe doors.

The long room was shaped something like a ship, and the room itself had a strangely inappropriate air of a coaster just come to port. Yet outside the huge windows, instead of the expected foam and tumble of green waves, were only moors, humped and slanted into far bluer distances, till they met and surrendered to the pale evening horizon. A brown stream rushed at a great pace under the stone bridge just below Clare's window. Every few yards, it swirled and poured over into eddies of rich cream, and then again ran brown and bright and clear, a most companionable stream, especially with the moon slipping over it in broken discs of gold.

Clare pushed aside the curtains and stood

for a few moments looking out Then, with a conscientious little sigh, she sat down to the writing-table After all, if it had not been for Bartholomew Bassett, she would not be here now

' *Dear Uncle Bart,—*

*" This is to explain my telegram that I won't be able to lunch with you to-morrow, after all, to tell you about the wedding So I am writing to tell you about it instead It had one or two of what the papers call ' unusual features In fact, I was the bride not Camilla, which is a very unusual feature for me. We were married at a register office by special licence and here we are being terribly felicitous '*

She broke off to ask her husband, who had just followed her up, how to spell felicitous " Donald gravely supplied the need Clare contested his scholarship, but gave in. He dropped down into a deep arm-chair in front of the fire, and tenderly watched her absorbed back and concentrated shoulders

I was sure there were two l's,' murmured Clare And resumed her narrative .—

*It mostly happened because of the wedding present that you helped me choose for that beast Camilla—though I suppose I oughtn't to call her that beast now, but shake hands over the tennis-net and say The better man won 'and things like that I think the better man did, you know because although I'm pretty awful in lots of ways. Don's going to be ever so much happier with me than with her He knew that all along and so did I And they had a frightful quarrel when my lovely present arrived, and was unpacked, because she actually wanted to send it back to me and said it was an insult Though how anyone could possibly call that divine heavenly fountain-pen and seal an insult, and with C. M engraved all over the case I simply can't understand, can you ? But Don told her she couldn't possibly and the row worked up, and I expect her mother made things worse '*

" Don, did Camilla's mother make things worse ? "

Don nodded emphatically *Much* worse '

*So they broke it off, and thus we may see, Uncle Bart darling what a good thing it was that I had the right sort of an instinct about sending a present, and that you had the right sort of instinct about giving me one to send Don moped for a day or two, and then he came to see me, and there's no need to go into that, is there ? The lucky part of it was that I had—again thanks to you—a lovely outfit to be married in and Don said I looked like ——*

Clare tried Persephone " in various ways on the blotting-paper Finally she capitulated and again asked Don to come to her aid

Ignorant baggage ! lovingly from her husband " Where were you educated ? "

Oh well, if you can't oblige, I'll just call it the Spirit of Spring "

Who's the Spirit of Spring ?

Me, in my lovely beech-green suède with the yellow handkerchief '

" You can't say that about yourself, Clare '

" I didn't You said it.'

Yes, but you can't repeat it in a letter !

" I can It'll please Uncle Bart He gave it to me to go to your wedding in I told you '

" Yes, and I'm not sure it was altogether delicate for you to have worn it at yours,' he teased her

" It was yours, too."

Mostly yours.

Persephone " whispered Clare, trying it once again with an anagrammatic rearrangement of the letters

He yielded and told her And you can add from me that you did really look rather delectable

*HE also says that I did look rather dellecktable, so thank you very much again I don't know what I should have done without you*

*But now though the problem is you see what am I to do about my wedding present to Camilla which of course was returned with all her other presents to everybody and which I brought up with me here, because I loved it so much I couldn't bear not to, and it's the only wedding present I've had, as nobody knew about Don and me ? On the other hand, I suppose you might easily say that I haven't had it at all because it was meant for Camilla. But then, I might easily argue, mightn't I, that although I was sending it to Camilla it was meant for Don's wedding as otherwise would I have bothered about Camilla ever at all ? A million times, no ! And this was Don's wedding, so can it be said, in a sort of way that the present chosen for the bride ought to go to the bride ? Especially with her initials on it. And I chose it with as much care for Camilla as if it had been for me myself And who was it said—was it you ?—that if you give freely and generously, there's always an unexpected reward for you ? (No, it wasn't you, it's over the bed, here !) But anyhow,*

*you and I, in a way, have had the same sort of rather deep experience, which shows how alike we are. Because you sent out a cheque to me, and got it back, and I sent Camilla a lovely present, and got it back, and we've both been rewarded a thousandfold. If you count getting to know me a reward, which I hope you do, because I think you're a tambie and a sweetie-pie, and Don has promised that he's sure to think so, too, though I expect he'll be more manly and reserved about it, and call you Sir for quite a long time.*

— Won't you, Don?

Won't I what, sweetheart? I was half asleep."

Call Uncle Bart, Sir?'

"As often as he likes. I'll buy all my trouser-presses there, too.'

I don't know if you can," doubtfully. It's all lovely expensive leather things, leather and pigskin and calf and suède and lizard and crocodile and snakeskin and—'

Just a Zoo, Clare, sweet, have you nearly finished that immense three-volume letter? We haven't come here only to write to Uncle Bart, you know.

No, but it's a duty, and duty comes first. Can't you go and have a bath?

No. I want to take you out and make love to you over there, just on the other side of the stone bridge."

It sounds tempting," said Clare, a trifle ruefully.

Well then, just sign it. Yours in haste, Clare, and come along and take some notice of me. I'm feeling left out with all this Uncle Bartery going on.'

You're not left out. I've asked you to help, two or three times. You've spelt several words.'

"I didn't bring you up here for a spelling bee, either."

Oh, well, just a tiny bit more!"

SILENCE for a few moments, except for the sound of Clare's pen sprawling over page after page of the Long Moor Hotel notepaper. Then —

'Don, will this do, do you think?' She twisted round in her chair and read it out —

*"Of course I would send the present back to you at once if you like, only I can't help knowing that then you'd probably just simply pack it up again and send it back to me, and it seems a pity to give you so much trouble, because it would only be dishonourably pretending to not know that you'd be sorry later on to think that you never gave me a wedding present at all. At least not on the day itself. And it would be too late afterwards, and especially as you've been so mixed up with it all and of course you'll go on being mixed up with our lives and be godfather to lots of our children and give them silver mugs and spoons and things. So would you like me to be honest and keep it straight away without any more fuss?*

You little sophist!" exclaimed her husband.

What's that?"

"Well, you wouldn't be doing all this honesty-on-both-sides stuff if it didn't work out at just this. That you like the pen and the seal, and that you hate the idea of sending them back.

Is that being a so-sophist?'

'Yes, Clare.'

She argued, with slight passion, that he was being unfair. I haven't written a word that isn't true, and Uncle Bart I understand that, even if you don't.

Yours in haste, Clare,' Don reminded her, declining to waste any more time on the terrific problem of Mr Bartholomew Bassett and his wedding present.

So Clare finally scribbled —

*Now Don has muddled me so that I don't know what's honest and what isn't. He says I'm a soffist, and that anyhow you must have peculiar notions of honesty, the same as me. I can't help thinking that if our ages had filled we'd have been much more suited to each other than me and Don.*

'Don, do you want to hear this bit?'

Please,' said Donald, "I'm enjoying this letter.'

Again she read aloud her last paragraph.

"How did you spell sophist?' he asked.

'Never mind. I don't care.'

He hauled himself up, and came across the room to look over her shoulder. Then he laughed. Then his arms went round her, and it was very difficult for her to write at all, though she managed to scribble one more line —

*At any rate, if it's all right, just send me a telegram.*

*Yours gratefully, and with lots of love and in great haste,*

CLARE.

* * * *

"HONESTY IS PERHAPS A MERE ABSTRACTION STOP DELIGHTED TO HEAR OF YOUR HAPPINESS PLEASE CONVEY MY CONGRATULATIONS TO HUSBAND YES I CONSIDER SOPHIST THE RIGHT WORD STOP HONOUR ME BY ACCEPTING FOUNTAIN PEN AND SEAL AS PRELIMINARY PRESENT CHRISTENING MUGS WILL FOLLOW LATER TO SUIT OCCASION

BARTHOLOMEW BASSETT.'

# POSSESSION

## ROLAND PERTWEE

*Illustrated by P. R. MAXWELL*

IN June Otis Pendle deserted Wall Street and came to Europe. With him came Iris Pendle his wife, two maids, a valet, three chauffeurs, four secretaries, an accountant, an antiquary and a substantial bodyguard of blue serged double-breasted gentlemen with blackjacks and automatics.

This was the season of the year when the Pendles did their shopping and when large areas of Europe stood and delivered up their treasures.

The Pendles shopping was on an extensive scale. It would range from a baton cut, thirty-carat diamond ring to a palace on the Grand Canal. Price was no object, neither was size. The diamond ring entered America on the middle finger of Iris's left hand and the palace was brought piecemeal by a fleet of steamers. Mr Pendle caused it to be re-erected on the coast of Florida where instead of masked ladies and elegant doges wandering beneath its painted ceilings it accommodated a company of leather-faced financiers and sunburnt girls in beach pyjamas.

Then one day a big wind blew and the palace filled and split like a sail. The painted ceilings cracked and fell, the stone fireplaces crumbled into dust, and flames devoured the panels, the rich hangings, canvases by masters, and much of the splendour that once was Venice.

When the wind blew itself out the palace was quite dead.

So Otis Pendle went to Europe and bought another.

When a man is rich enough it does not take him long to realize that the world's fairest possessions are in a shop window and that all he need do to have them is to produce a cheque and say "Give me that."

Many people were of the opinion that Otis Pendle had bought his wife along with the rest of his purchases, but they were wrong. Iris was very fond of her husband. She shared his passion for acquisition. It would have been hard to find a couple better suited to one another.

Iris was twenty years younger than Otis and was absurdly pretty. Perhaps she was a little dumb, but Otis never complained about that. He was the kind of man who regarded a wife as a recreation rather than an exercise.

Apart from the mental stimulus of his work in Wall Street, Otis Pendle relied almost exclusively for his pleasure on the visual aspects of life. The visual aspect of Iris was perfect.

She was extraordinarily companionable. She would sit for hours, her hand in his, just smiling along.

What was so pleasing about Iris's smile was that it was as natural as the sun. It did not demand the inspiration of humour or gaiety. It just came out and shone. And during their summer shopping tour it shone brightest of all.

As the long procession of motor-cars conveyed the Pendles and their suite along the highways of Europe, Otis and Iris sat contentedly side by side—Iris smiling her pretty smile and Otis scanning the townscape and landscape with his steel-blue eyes for things of loveliness to possess in memory or in fact.

From his earliest beginnings Otis Pendle


Copyright, 1933, by Roland Pertwee.

*"Look here," said the man angrily "you have no right to talk to me like that Apart from the fact that the dog isn't worth five bob to anyone but me, it isn't fair"*

had cultivated observation. He would probably have been an artist had he not devoted his energies to finance

Of less than average height, thin as a reed and with a face that looked like a drop forging upon which a skilled craftsman had worked with file and graver he went his devouring way through life, acquiring unto himself whatsoever his fancy desired

It was not his habit to haggle over prices. Experience had taught him the price of most things and psychology did the rest There was the case of the Lincolnshire farm house, which was not for sale Actual value, three thousand pounds Additional value because it was not for sale say fifteen hundred. Sentimental value, due to owner's family having lived there for fourteen generations, say a thousand pounds. Total five thousand five hundred Deduct five hundred on account of owner's wife's obvious eagerness to touch big money Add a thousand on account of Iris's publicly expressed eagerness to have the place

So Otis Pendle wrote a guaranteed cheque for six thousand pounds and that is why a bit of old Lincolnshire stands to-day on a river bank in the Beaverskill mountains

He was a man of quick decisions who wasted few words. Confronted by his secretaries and a pile of cablegrams, he delivered his judgments in the briefest terms.

"Yes—No—Yes—Buy Sell Hold on—Yes—Buy—" etcetera

He was so engaged one evening when Iris Pendle was troubled with an idea.

"Buy!" she repeated. "We do buy a lot of things don't we?"

"Why not?"

"I know—but still we do."

Good for trade

"Yes, but I wonder if it is nice for the things."

Her wondering sounded like the prelude of an argument and Otis Pendle did not encourage arguments. He stalled with a generality

"Circulation is the backbone of business."

But once started, Iris was not to be sidetracked

"I wonder if any of them mind," she said

"Ever seen a chair or a picture minding what happened to it?"

"No."

"Well, then!" said Otis Pendle in the manner of a man who has disposed of the matter once and for all. He reverted to the pile of cablegrams, tossing them to his secretaries with monosyllabic instructions.

"No—No—Dismiss him. Buy. Hello."

One of the cablegrams remained between his sharp little fingers and he frowned over it. It was from his partner. His partner feared a panic in a section of the market in which they were heavily involved. He urged an immediate return, and he was no alarmist

"And yet," said Iris, "you would think that roots would feel. Things with roots quite easily might feel. A house, for instance. That Lincolnshire farm for instance. It's seemed kind of sulky to me ever since we moved it from where it belonged

Things *belong* to their owners,' said Otis Pendle, 'and the owner is the person who's paid and taken delivery.

I know, dear, that's what we think and what I suppose is right, but wouldn't it be strange if although you had bought and paid for and taken delivery of something it never belonged to you after all?"

But he wasn't going to be bothered with a lot of fluffy talk like that. There were important matters to discuss.

Baby," he said, "I got to go back to New York right now."

Because he believed he might be able to conduct his business and return in a few days, and because Iris had promised to go and see her mother in Paris, he did not suggest that she should accompany him. New York in July is no place to go to unless you are compelled. But it was the first time they had been parted since marriage, and as the car conveyed them, at ten o'clock next morning, to Waterloo Station, Otis Pendle was troubled with the premonitory symptoms of loneliness. It is true that he was to be accompanied by a skeleton staff of one secretary, one valet, one accountant, and two bodyguards, but their association with their master was of a strictly formal nature. He felt that he was going to miss the human companionship of Iris more than he dared to confess. If an alteration of plans had not been entirely alien to his nature he would have thrown her into the train and taken her along with him. But to have done that would have been an admission of weakness, and with the tremendous interests he had in the world he dared not allow even a shadow of doubt to circulate that would undermine his character for making decisions and sticking to them. But even the knowledge that he was supporting his own conception of himself failed to dispel the clouds of gloom that gathered around his head and heart.

THEY arrived at the station in good time, and with ten minutes to spare he suggested that they should walk down to the bookstall and buy something to read.

Iris was still sitting, and without letting her know what he was at, Otis Pendle made a mental sketch of the curves of her mouth to bear him company in absence. Perhaps for the first time he tried to analyse what it was about Iris that so endeared her to him. Was it the effortlessness of her companionship? Yes, perhaps. But chiefly, he believed, it was the constant, doglike devotion she displayed.

And as this realization formed itself his eyes fell upon Joxer. Of course, he had no means of knowing that the dog who sat upon his haunches and dripped from a long pink tongue, was Joxer. To the millionaire Joxer was merely a dog with an extraordinarily affable smile and a tail which despite the fact that he was sitting on it cocked up at the end.

The dog's eyes were fixed upon his master, a shabby individual who was studying the advertisement columns in a morning paper which someone had dropped out of a taxi.

The most ardent and myopic lover of dumb friends would not have described Joxer as a handsome dog. In general Joxer followed the outlines of a Shropshire terrier; his mask, however, was frankly cast in Aberdeen. His feet were enormous, and his legs, although bowed, were long. His treacle-coloured eyes, set in a stare of smiling devotion upon his master, were frankly reminiscent of a spaniel's. Fore and aft and from A to Z the dog Joxer was the final statement of what may be achieved by an unchecked policy of natural selection.

Otis Pendle's studies had never included a research into the terrain of dog fancying. To be frank he did not know one breed from another with the exception of the Pekinese about which there can be no mistake. To his uninformed eye, Joxer was neither better nor worse to look at than any other dog. But what attracted him was the dog's ludicrous resemblance to Iris in respect of his ability to register amiability and devotion. He suspected, too, that there reposed in Joxer deep wells of companionship and loyalty. And he was perfectly right.

Otis Pendle had never owned a dog, but until then, he had never experienced those premonitory symptoms of loneliness which supply the primary reason why people do own dogs. He foresaw that with a dog like Joxer a man would possess not only a companion but a confidant.

It was then that he heard Iris say —

"Dear, just look at that dog sitting there with his tail up. Isn't he cute?"

The single glance she directed at her husband was enough to inform her that his face had assumed its buying expression.

"Well, why don't you?" she said. "He'd make company for you on the voyage."

Otis Pendle favoured her with a quick nod and, taking a step forward, addressed to Joxer's master the single word —

"Listen."

"Yes?"

The man lowered the newspaper and looked at the millionaire.

"I like that dog," said Otis Pendle.

"So do I," was the reply, spoken with a note of warmth that robbed it of offence.

"Sir, I wish to buy him."

"You couldn't. Not likely."

The remark was provocative and Otis Pendle stiffened

'He's your dog,' said he "but I have yet to find something that I couldn't buy

The man laughed

'Even if you did you wouldn't get him"

Twice within twenty-four hours Otis Pendle had listened to that sort of talk and it didn't please him

'The boat train starts in five minutes," he said, "so there is little time to waste in argument I ask you sir, to be good enough to name your price. I am ready to pay anything in reason"

It was evident that the man was unused to doing business at such a speed The shabbiness of his appearance was proof of that

What makes you think I might be ready to sell?" he asked

Mr Pendle's reply was, perhaps, a thought callous

'Unless I am mistaken, you were reading the employment columns in that paper"

A flush rose upon the man's cheeks and mounted to his forehead

'Yes," he said, "yes. Notice things don't you? As a matter of fact I was looking for someone with a small capital to invest in a trifling invention of mine. Perhaps I could interest you

My interest is in the dog I would be willing to pay twenty-five pounds in notes

"Look here," said the man angrily "you have no right to talk to me like that Apart from the fact he isn't worth five bob to anyone but me, it—well it isn't fair'

'If by fair you mean my offer isn't enough

Oh hell go away' the man pleaded "You can see damn well that I'm broke and it's a low-down trick dangling your money in front of me That dog is the only friend I have in the world and I'm the only friend he has and that's all there is to it

Otis Pendle regarded temper as one of the surest signs of weakening, and he hastened to pursue the advantage it offered

Thirty pounds, said he and beckoned his accountant to approach. "Give me your wallet

The accountant observed that the train would be pulling out in one minute

Tell 'em to hold it said Otis Pendle, and produced a wad of bank notes

In dealing with small vendors the sight of money is always the most persuasive argument Try as he would the man could not keep his eyes off it

"Now make up your mind, said Otis Pendle

A hundred pounds was the sum that in the man's imagination stood between himself and fortune. One hundred pounds which would enable him to get out the patterns of that little invention for which the world was to be so grateful To do him justice he did not imagine that this steely-eyed little American would pay anything like so much for Joxer His inventor's mind was ignorant of the psychological factors that arise in a sale. He did not realize the immense drag that was bestowed upon him by the imminent departure of the train. It was in a spirit of jest rather than with any serious intention that he said —

"If you can pay thirty, you can pay a hundred. Take it or leave it'

'I'll take it.' said Otis Pendle Put him on the train right now'

As they hurried down the platform to where Otis Pendle's bodyguard stood at the open door of his compartment Joxer's tail wagged merrily A dog being the loyalest of all creatures is incapable of credulting his master with treachery There was no suspicion in his mind when the man, in a hard dry voice ordered him to jump in. The fat cushions of the first-class compartment convinced him that they had come up in the world He sat grinning as Otis Pendle thrust a wad of bank notes into his master's hand

A whistle blew Otis Pendle kissed Iris, entered the carriage and closed the door It was not until then that Joxer knew that something was wrong and, crouching on his haunches, prepared to spring. He was too late Otis Pendle had the leather strap of the window hoist in his hand and he whipped it up as Joxer dashed himself against the glass. Simultaneously the train started with a jerk and the man leapt forward

Take back your money," he yelled

A porter gripped him round the waist and dragged him back

From Joxer came a sharp agonized bark The engine chugged The group before the window vanished. A blur of faces streamed behind the glass

FOLLOWING his usual practice of taking things in their order of importance. Otis Pendle concerned himself for ten minutes with the market quotations before turning his attention to Joxer In so doing he was not only following routine, but was displaying a delicacy of feeling for which few of his acquaintances would have credited him He realized that the dog would require a space of time to adjust himself to his changed surroundings Neither man nor beast falls automatically into an unfamiliar situation He needs a little while to acquaint himself with the geography of his employer's mind. Wherefore Otis

Pendle continued to wrap himself in his newspaper until the train was flicking through Surbiton His ears had informed him that Joxer had climbed upon the seat opposite and this he took to be a good sign. No doubt the dog was looking out of the window and enjoying the experience

Encouraged by this belief Otis Pendle laid his newspaper aside and delivered upon Joxer one of his rare smiles It was not often that he displayed such an amiable front, and when he did he expected reciprocation Never was a man more disappointed The dog, Joxer looked at him with an expression of despair and hatred then turned away his head and searched the racing landscape with his treacle-coloured eyes

Otis Pendle could not remember when anyone had snubbed him like that but since the moment was inopportune for hard words, he chose to behave as if Joxer had been guilty of unconscious bad manners which he could well afford to ignore

Well old man' said he 'How's it go?'

For answer, Joxer curled his upper lip and emitted a threatening snarl which implied as plainly as spoken words

'You know what to expect if you talk to me'

The millionaire's brows came down in a straight line of hard displeasure

"Cut that out,' he snapped sharply

Joxer repeated the snarl

Meaning me?" it inquired

"Meaning you

It was a declaration of war, and Joxer accepted it fearlessly He had lost his master, and what else was there to lose? He might as well go down fighting

He swivelled round on his haunches and bared his teeth. The muscles of his thighs tightened in preparation for a spring

Otis Pendle closed his fists defensively

Threaten me would you?'

'Yow" said Joxer

Then now's where you learn who's master'

'Gettahe!

There was a small gold penknife in Otis Pendle's waistcoat pocket, which he removed and opened with a single hand The other fastened quietly upon the leather strap of the window hoist It was a sharp knife and he had little doubt it would cut through the strap with a single slice Of what he was less certain was what Joxer would be doing meanwhile The possibility of those sharp teeth taking a mouthful of his throat or face seemed likely But once committed to an act Otis Pendle went through with it in defiance of attendant dangers With a powerful slash he cut at the tightened strap and failed to sever it

Joxer had come to his feet at the beginning of the manœuvre but witnessing his opponent's failure to arm himself, he sat down again with a contemptuous grunt that was a hundred times more insulting than open attack It was as if he said

'Go on arm yourself I can afford to wait"

To be treated like that by one of his own possessions was more than pride could endure Once again the knife slashed and this time the strap came away in Otis Pendle's hand

Folding it in the centre and gripping both ends, he held it aloft menacingly

" Going to be friends or take a licking, he invited

And there was that in Joxer's eyes that plainly read

Neither "

NO dog can serve two masters, and no true dog will take a dressing down from any man who is not his master Only respect for the man himself can earn for him the privilege to chastise without fear of reprisals In his ignorance of canine psychology, Otis Pendle laboured under the belief that once you had licked a dog he became your willing slave and you his master Actually he had no desire to beat anybody or anything so long as they fell in with his commands. But it was absurd to own a dog who refused to display even common politeness. Such conduct violated the sacred principles of ownership. After all he had paid four hundred times Joxer's real value, and if that did not constitute ownership, what did? And there was more to it than that He had bought Joxer on account of his smile, his uplifted tail and the companionship it was reasonable to suppose he would provide And this just and reasonable ambition the dog had set himself to defy

And so taking this with that and bearing in mind that it is not consistent for a man of world-wide reputation for mastery to bow his will to that of a common cur, Otis Pendle declared the battle on

In what followed some small technical knowledge of how to lick a dog would have stood him in good stead Had he seized Joxer by the scruff or even by the tail, as one does with a hound, his chances of success would have been greater Swishing about with a cumbersome window strap was the least effective method he could have chosen For one thing Joxer was never there when it landed and for another it was exceedingly exhausting At the fourth or fifth shot Otis Pendle's shirt stud lost its head and his collar opened up its wings like a bird The dog Joxer meanwhile, weaved scientifically on the opposite seat

*With a rapidity of which no-one would have suspected him, Otis Pendle released his hold on the strap and smacked his right fist into the other's jaw.*

awaiting an opportunity to put an end to the business. This occurred at the fifth shot. The strap failing with a whack on the cushions that set the dust flying remained there for a moment while Otis Pendle gathered his strength for a fresh assault. In that moment it would have been easy for Joxer to have bitten his opponent in any part of his anatomy that he cared to choose, but the fact was that he simply could not be bothered with the man any longer. Experience had told him that biting people led to a whole lot of fuss and trouble. Joxer knew this because, in his infancy, he had made the mistake of taking a chop at an old gentleman who had threatened him with an umbrella. The alternative to war is disarmament accordingly Joxer resisted the temptation to treat himself to a mouthful of millionaire and fastened his teeth upon the strap instead.

Until then the fight had been conducted in silence, but it is impossible for a dog to engage in a bout of tug-of-war without a musical accompaniment.

Bracing his feet against the seat cushions and jerking his head this way and that Joxer gave vent to a series of growls and yelps on a rising scale of fury.

A similar desire for expression must have possessed Otis Pendle for as he tugged at the strap a crackle of oaths snapped through his shut teeth.

'Drop that, you——'

The sweat was standing in beads upon his forehead when the door slid back and one of his personal bodyguard leapt into the compartment from the corridor. The bodyguard's name was Wombarth and in the five years in which he had faithfully served Otis Pendle never before had the opportunity arisen to protect his master's person from violence. No doubt it would have been more agreeable to his *amour propre* to knock off a bandit but this was not the occasion for pausing to regret. Whipping a blackjack from his pocket he wielded it aloft with the intention of dispatching Joxer with a single blow. But it was not the blow but Mr Wombarth who fell. With a rapidity of which no one would have suspected him, Otis Pendle released his hold on the strap and smacked his right fist into Mr Wombarth's undefended jaw. Through a vignette of stars, which is the margin of oblivion, he heard his master declaim —

'This is my fight. Fade out of here.'

And nothing if not obedient, Mr Wombarth faded out through the open door.

Panting from his exertions, Otis Pendle pushed the man's feet out of the way, slid the door to and fell back in his seat. The intrusion of Mr Wombarth had robbed him of any inclination to pursue with the task of chastisement. Rather he felt that he and Joxer together had warded off the powers of evil and by the same token had become comrades in arms.

There was a singularly melting look in his eye as he turned his head toward where Joxer lay on the opposite seat with the window strap between his two forepaws.

'I guess we'll call it a truce, old dog,' said he.

But Joxer only lowered his head upon the spoils of victory and said not a word.

AMONG the other canine passengers upon the *Iphegenia* were three inquisitive Cairns, a motherly spaniel with a liver-and-white coat, and a red setter justly indignant about leaving England at the very opening of the grouse season. This mixed company was accommodated in kennels lashed to the boat deck. The kennels were arranged in a square which thus afforded their occupants the opportunity to enjoy a little social intercourse.

Dogs were not allowed in cabins and state rooms, a rule which caused Otis Pendle some annoyance. He realized that Joxer was an obstinate dog, and it would take time to convince him that he had a new master to serve and respect, and he had counted on the hours they would spend together during the voyage to supply this knowledge. But since rules are rules he did not openly complain. He conducted Joxer to his new quarters and issued instructions to the kennel steward that he himself would bring the dog his meals. At the conclusion he asked the man if dogs suffered from sea sickness.

'He's a sick dog now, sir.'

'What do you mean?'

The man shrugged his shoulders.

'You just have to look at him. Way he carries his tail. Eyes, too. Miserable like. Had him long, sir?'

'Less than a day.'

'That's where it is, then. Homesick. Miss his master, sir.'

Otis Pendle coloured a dull red.

'I'm his master.'

It was not the steward's place to argue with distinguished passengers. He said —

'Best keep him locked up till we are out of port.'

'Why?'

'He wouldn't be the first dog to make a jump for it—cat, neither. Still if you're satisfied he's taken to you.'

Otis Pendle rubbed his chin.

'Lock him up, then.'

He hated saying it. It humbled his pride. Damn it, the dog was his. There was a scowl on his face as the steward unlocked

the grid of the kennel run and invited Joxer to enter

Save that his tail still hung low Joxer entered his prison like an aristocrat and vanished into the boxed-in part at the other end

I'll fetch him some water'

'No I will Give me that key" said Otis Pendle

It was the first personal service he had rendered in years He was a man who rang bells and gave orders Carrying a bowl of water on a crowded ship is a tiresome business. At the end of the journey he spilled it and had to go back for more

'Ought to be grateful to me for this," he thought

When he regained the boat deck he saw, with satisfaction that Joxer had come out of hiding and was saying something to the motherly spaniel

That's the idea" he said

Hearing his voice. Joxer retired

Otis Pendle was frowning when he unlocked the grill and put down the bowl among the straw

Want a drink?'

There was no answer

"Well it's here if you do."

He relocked the grill and went away At the head of the companion ladder he threw a glance over his shoulder Joxer had come out and was lapping the water

It is absurd that the sight of a dog drinking should have made Otis Pendle's heart leap with pleasure He retraced his steps for a better view Joxer lifted his head, gave one look, and backed out of sight

Maybe he'd had enough," said Otis Pendle 'But if he'd just smile once.'

ENTERING his master's cabin with a tray of unanswered letters, Otis Pendle's secretary was amazed and delighted when roughly ordered to go away Departure from routine being an unusual event, he paused to inquire into the cause of his master's preoccupation

Mr Pendle was cutting up cold mutton into small cubes. When asked if he needed any help he said —

"No"

But the secretary still hesitated The best doctors in the world had prepared Otis Pendle's diet sheet and he knew every detail of it by heart He knew also that it specifically forbade the consumption of cold mutton Venturing greatly he put the question

"Do you think you are wise, sir in eating that?

With biting sarcasm Mr Pendle replied that he had no intention of eating it

'If you want to know why I'm doing this it's to teach a dog who's master"

It was the first time in the secretary's experience that Otis Pendle had given obviously a foolish answer For how, he asked himself, can a man demonstrate mastery by undertaking a menial task If any conclusion were to be drawn from the affair it must prove the reverse of Mr Pendle's contention. This, however, he kept to himself and for something to say, remarked

He seems a cute little dog, sir"

"He's neither"

No, sir, no. And what might his name be, sir?

It might be anything I didn't ask. Wish I had That's all'

The secretary cleared his throat and went out

Otis Pendle emptied the chopped-up meat into a large bowl with a feeling of resentment It was too bad of that man to have sold the dog and withheld his name You couldn't come to terms with a creature if you didn't know what to call it It was enough to offend an animal Presumably he could rechristen him. but that wasn't the same It would give rise to the opinion that he thought the dog's original baptismal name was unworthy He had embarked upon a difficult campaign with a severe handicap. Nor was that all Ever since he had owned the dog people had conspired to make him look ridiculous Wombarth, the kennel steward, his secretary There was laughter from strangers, too, as he bore the bowl of meat along the crowded deck Of course, it was impossible for persons seated in low chairs to know that the bowl contained a dog's dinner but they had no right to assume that he was carrying it around as a precautionary measure against *mal de mer*

If Joxer had shown any symptoms of relaxing the severity of his attitude it would have been easy to ignore these annoyances But this Joxer resolutely declined to do. Even the tasty dish of mutton failed to lure him forth from the hermitage into which he retired when Otis Pendle approached And it wasn't as if he behaved like that with other people He was civil enough with the kennel steward, with the motherly spaniel and towards evening Otis Pendle caught him allowing a very small boy to fondle his tail through the bars of the run

You want to be careful he doesn't give you a nip," he said, sternly

He likes me" said the small boy, 'an I was helpin' him to put his tail up'

For the first time within memory Otis Pendle was guilty of a deliberate lie

He isn't the kind of dog that keeps his tail up.'

'You are crammin me,' said the child, straightened up and thumped a small fist on the roof of the kennel. "Goo-bye, Bobo'

From the interior came a more or less amiable "Woof

Otis Pendle pondered upon the name Bobo after the child had departed. Was it possible that his infant mind had divined the dog's real name? It might be worth trying to find out

Bobo," he said. 'come out of that and eat your dinner. Bobo

There was no response

Bobo!

Silence prevailed

That's all right, thought Otis Pendle 'Wouldn't own a dog with a name like that'

THAT night Otis Pendle sat alone brooding upon the mysteries of ownership. The latter years of his life had been devoted to increasing the total of his possessions. It had been said that he had a megalomania for stripping things from their natural surroundings and leaving them in crates and warehouses in various parts of the world, hidden from the light of day. It was not easy to find a place for everything. Certain objects demanded certain backgrounds and those backgrounds might be difficult to create. Until now he had confined his purchases to inanimate objects insentient and powerless to complain. The dog Joxer was the first purchase he had ever made of a living and rebellious soul. It was of paramount importance to Otis Pendle to persuade the dog to accept him as owner. He felt that if he failed in that intention the entire structure of his conviction that to buy is to own would be undermined. And if that were to happen what then? The words of his wife, those foolish words recurred unpleasantly 'Wouldn't it be strange if although you bought and paid for and took delivery of something, it never belonged to you after all?'

"I'm getting morbid,' he said to himself

He went on deck

A black bank of clouds sundered and the moon looked down upon the sea

A boy and girl were leaning against the bulwarks, and as Otis Pendle passed he heard the boy say -

I'd like to buy you the moon

And the girl answer

Moons don't come into the market darling, moons and souls.

The water swished along the ship's sides the engines pulsed, and through the quiet of the night came a low and sorrowful wail

Otis Pendle had never heard that cry before, but he knew at once whence it came It was a nameless dog crying for his master

There is magic in the moon which inspires both love and grief. A man may be callous enough in the hard light of day and soften to the maid beside him when the moon is riding the sky. And a dog may be brave enough at hiding true feelings until the moon comes out and bids his sorrow to give tongue

Otis Pendle stopped short with fists clenched

Gosh! I can't stand that, rules or no rules, said he, and dashed up the companion ladder to the boat deck

The moonlight reflected in Joxer's treacle coloured eyes made them gleam like ghostly beacons. He was sitting on his haunches behind the bars with his head up and his mouth just wide enough open to allow a melancholy minor of woe to issue. His senses dulled by grief did not inform him of anyone's approach until the millionaire was on his knees before the kennel

'All right, sonny, come below with me for a bit'

At the sound of that hated voice Joxer's dignity reasserted itself and as Otis Pendle unlocked the grill he backed once more into the interior of the kennel

But Otis Pendle was not to be denied. Squirming the upper portion of his body into the run he put a hand through the low archway behind which Joxer had retired. It was a perilous undertaking, but Otis Pendle had taken plenty of risks in his past and was still man enough to take a few more. He did not attempt to snatch away his hand when Joxer's teeth closed upon it with a warning pressure. Instead, he took a grip upon the dog's lower jaw and drew him firmly towards the archway. He could hear Joxer's toe-nails scratching along the floor boards in an effort to resist. Otis Pendle wondered at that, when a sharp bite would have offered the best form of resistance. He did not realize that, for the first time, the dog was conscious of a vague respect for the man. The respect did not go beyond some small admiration for fearlessness. It did not go to the length of coming forth willingly. But come forth he did, and once outside he allowed Otis Pendle to pick him up and carry him below

To avoid argument with the cabin steward Otis Pendle dropped Joxer through the window of his state-room which opened upon A Deck, and, having done so, walked through the library and approached it by way of a corridor. He hoped he would find Joxer curled up upon the bed, but his hopes

were unrewarded. To all appearances, the dog had gone, and it was only by what he had learned of Joxer's habits in their relations with one another that he located him at the back of one of the wardrobes. After the tenderness he had displayed, this voluntary retirement was almost more than Otis Pendle could endure.

Had the pundits of Wall Street been present in that state-room in the moments that followed, their hearts must have rejoiced. For they would have known that a man of granite was weakening at last.

"Come out, dog. Don't be so mean. Have a heart, can't you?"

Something in the tone of the voice was more than Joxer's resentment could withstand. Casting away pride and dignity, he crawled forth and turning upon Otis Pendle a pair of pleading eyes, he reared himself up on his haunches and begged.

Had Joxer been more familiar with the character of the man he would never had been guilty of such folly. To Otis Pendle that pleading posture had but one meaning—subservience. The battle had been fought and he had won, and now the conquered had thrown in the sponge and come to terms. The case for ownership had been proved.

With the light of victory in his eyes, Otis

*"We're in the same boat, ol' man," he whispered. "Both got something we can't bear to lose, 'n don't mean to lose."*

Pendle rested his hands upon his hips and tossed a chuckle of delight into the air.

So you know who's master at last' said he.

And to prove that he was wrong, the dog Joxer bit his ankle to the bone.

* * * *

"But it don't make sense, going back on the *Iphegenia*," said Otis Pendle's partner.

'Got to be done."

"With the market the way it is, you might as well have stayed in England as come over for two days.'

"Got to get back.'

"Then, again, what's the idea sleeping on board instead of home?"

"Got a dog on board.'

"Can't you bring him ashore?'

Otis Pendle shook his head.

'Got to stay there, else the quarantine authorities'll hold him up three months on the other side."

'Now see here," urged the partner 'don't be in a hurry. Hang on three weeks. It's going to mean plenty money.

Got plenty,' said Otis Pendle, 'and I wouldn't trust that dog to last three weeks. He's pining.'

'What's his trouble?'

"Got a breaking heart. Wants his master.

'Aren't you his master? Doesn't he belong to you?"

An expression of grief and mortification swept over Otis Pendle's face.

'No, sir, I'm just the poor fool who bought him.'

* * * *

Otis Pendle did not concern himself with the New York skyline as the *Iphegenia* thrashed down river towards the sea. He was telling Joxer that they were going home.

"Home, old man, home.

It would be pleasant to record that Joxer believed him implicitly but Otis Pendle had displayed too many changes of front to allow him to forsake his natural suspicion. He knew that the millionaire had abandoned the effort to assume ownership, and he was not going to take any chances that might revive those possessive instincts. Without being hostile he still remained wary. And he still refused to accept favours from the man. The dinners Otis Pendle brought with his own hands were severely ignored until he had gone away. Even then Joxer ate but sparingly. And that called for character for they were wonderful dinners, more tasty than anything he had ever been offered before.

Otis Pendle spent a good deal of time on the voyage composing radiograms. Also he used the ocean telephone prodigally. One morning he talked for twenty minutes to a firm of private detectives, and the description he gave of Joxer's master was a remarkable piece of portraiture. His accountant had supplied him with the numbers of the bank notes which he had disbursed at Waterloo Station, and these he caused to be circularized at all the banking houses. One of the less discerning actions he took to trace Joxer's owner was to insert inquiries in the employment and personal columns of every London newspaper. It did not occur to him that since the man had got the hundred pounds he needed for his invention his interest in newspapers would have lapsed.

The replies that he received on board from the firm of detectives were couched in most encouraging terms but failed to report any real progress. Otis Pendle knew that they were keeping the case on rollers and would spin it out as long as he was prepared to pay. He was, however, determined to go through with it at any cost. He was a man of his word and he had promised the dog and that promise was going to be kept.

HE had not informed Iris that he was on his way back, being determined to surprise her with an unlooked for arrival. In the friendlessness of his present state he missed her very much but for some inexplainable reason he felt that he could never really enjoy her society until he had restored Joxer to his owner. During the last few days he had suffered from a vague presentiment that nothing would go right with him until this had been done. Obviously it was all nonsense but the presentiment endured and enlarged in his mind. For the first time in his life he was nervy. He kept imagining that the dog would die or that his master would never be found. He lay awake at night thinking about it, and sometimes would switch on the light and ask Joxer to assure him that it wasn't so. He had formed the habit of smuggling Joxer into his cabin after dark and returning him to his kennel at dawn. But there was little companionship to be had out of the practice. Joxer would lie under the bed and refuse to be mated. There was nothing whatever in common between them. The barriers existed as firmly as ever.

On the last day of the voyage, as they were passing The Bishops, Otis Pendle's desire for companionship drove him to put a call through to Paris in the hope of a word with his wife. The connexion was made and a cloudy voice replied to his across the ocean.

Iris, is this Iris?"

Who's calling?"

He gave his name and the voice began to speak rapidly, anxiously

Didn't he know? Iris was in London—Wimpole Street—nursing home—operation a failure—Bazeworth coming from Edinburgh to operate again to-morrow morning. Still hope.

Otis Pendle stumbled back to his stateroom with terror in his heart.

"A forfeit," he said to himself and slumped down on the bed.

And then the strangest thing happened. The dog Joxer came forth from under the bed and laid his muzzle upon Otis Pendle's knee. Who shall say what chord of sympathy the man's distress had struck in the heart of the dog, which expunged bitterness and resentment? But the fact remains that, like any true dog, he weighed in at a time of trial and was a friend. Otis Pendle hardly dared to believe his senses, and almost imperceptibly he slid his hand over the coverlet and rested it on Joxer's head.

"We're in the same boat, ol' man," he whispered. "Both got something we can't bear to lose. 'n don't *mean* to lose."

And looking down he saw that Joxer was smiling at him, and that it was almost the same smile that he had seen at Waterloo.

At six o'clock next morning Otis Pendle left Cherbourg by aeroplane for England and with him went Joxer in a basket.

A friendly mist lay over Croydon aerodrome, and to avoid any unpleasantness with the authorities Otis Pendle caused the pilot to land at the far end of the field and dropped Joxer surreptitiously over the side.

When asked at the wicket to whom the dog belonged who snuffled at his heels, he was able truthfully to state that he couldn't say.

"He seems to have taken a fancy to you," said the official and was at a loss to understand why the haggard little American seemed suddenly a happier man.

Before entering the car which awaited him Otis Pendle rang up the nursing home and Joxer was beside him to hear that the operation was now being performed. Together they rushed out and Otis Pendle gave an address to the chauffeur and jumped into the car.

"Hi! the dog's got in too," shouted the official.

But Otis Pendle did not appear to have heard.

As the car sped along the new arterial road he leaned forward in the seat. And the dog, Joxer, who sat beside him also leaned forward and sniffed excitedly at the familiar London smells.

Presently Otis Pendle put an arm round the dog's neck.

"If I could have got you home first I'd have done it, ol' man, only you see the way it is."

But Joxer was filled with thoughts of his own which were growing more immense with every revolution of the wheels.

At Streatham Common the road was up and they had to take a loopway. A little way along Joxer dragged his head from the encircling arms, stiffened, and barked twice. The next moment he was scratching furiously with his forepaws against the window.

"Stop," cried Otis Pendle, and threw open the door of the car.

But the dog Joxer did not immediately leap out. Turning his treacle-coloured eyes upon the millionaire he grinned sublimely, and resting a cold nose against the steel forged chin he licked it.

Perhaps there were tears in Otis Pendle's eyes, for he did not witness the passing of Joxer until he beheld a streak of fur belting down the road a hundred yards away.

'Follow that dog,' he shouted and a minute later cried "Stop."

Joxer was scratching at the door of a shabby little house. Also he was yelping sharply, imperatively.

The door opened and a man in shirt sleeves stood there staring. The dog Joxer stared back and as he stared his tail rose erect and flung itself this way and that like a shaking mat. Then the man held out his arms and the dog leapt and the two of them rolled out of sight into the dark hallway beyond.

"Get out of it and get on," said Otis Pendle. And his heart was hammering with joy almost too great to endure.

He arrived at the nursing home as Sir John Bazeworth was taking his departure.

'A very complete success, Mr Pendle.'

'It would be," said Otis Pendle, as though he had never known a moment's anxiety.

Sir John took the compliment unto himself with a bow.

"DEAR," said Iris, "I quite forgot to ask how you got on with that cute little dog?"

"So so. He was kind of difficult at first, but we understood one another at the end."

"Where is he now?"

"I fetched him back to his home. You see, sometimes you can buy a thing and pay for it and take delivery and for all that it doesn't belong to you."

Iris was too good a wife to claim originality for that theme. She said that she had seen the dinkiest little Tudor house at Rickmansworth and thought, maybe, he would like to buy it.

But Otis Pendle said he guessed it kind of fitted in where it was.

# THE MAN ON THE

OSTENSIBLY, materially, exactly they had no more to do with each other than a coaling schooner plying along the coast has to do with the ocean tramp bound for the Pacific which it passes at night in the Channel. For a short space of time the few cabin lights in the iron wall of the ocean tramp glitter down on the port and starboard beams of the little schooner with her swollen topsail and her bending jibs. Perhaps a voice in the darkness from the iron wall calls out above the thump of the screw. In the deeper darkness below a voice answers. Neither knows who the other may be. Two voices, met in that instant and swept to nothing in the wind that blows away the smoke of the one and fills the sails of the other. In half an hour they are out of sight. The night has obliterated them from each other as completely as though their meeting had been mysteriously written for that one moment and then for ever wiped from off the face of a slate.

Returning late from a midwifery case in Tewkesbury, and about a mile on the main road from his little village of Tredington, Dr. Ebhart's engine stopped with a few spitting jerks. Well-known symptoms. He was getting out of his car to fix the adjustment on the tank which connected the carburetter with the last reserve gallon of petrol when a man approached him on the road.

In his hurry to get home and to bed it was most unlikely that Dr. Ebhart would have entered into conversation with a complete stranger. Even with so much as the civility of a good night. The man might have been a tramp and only too eager with such encouragement to take advantage of a friendly greeting.

Long before that hour all the farmers and their labourers in the distant cottages were in their beds and asleep. There could have been nothing to bring this pedestrian along that road either to the city of Gloucester or of Tewkesbury.

Subconsciously, the thought had actually passed through Dr. Ebhart's mind to say something. A congenial greeting. One stranger to another in a not-too-congenial world. And yet ungracious though it might seem he had decided he would not say even good night. As the man came towards him in the glare of his stationary headlights, a whitened figure, intensified in the bright arc of that illumination, he made up his mind to that. Shutting his mouth in the way that involuntarily, we accompany a thought with some kind of gesture or expression, he adjusted the gadget on the tank.

The snap of the adjustment on the almost empty tank with the silent engine sounded in that illuminated darkness like the loud tap of a hammer on an empty tin. And as it fell, the church clock in Tredington, a mile away off the main road, began to strike the hour.

Tredington is not so much a village as a cluster of farmhouses and labourers' cottages scattered along a side road that turns away from the Gloucester road towards Cheltenham. A square-towered church nesting amongst the thatched farm buildings and the cider apple orchards gives this hamlet the distinction of a parish, though it has no shops. There is a forge, but there is no inn.

And the church clock was striking instantly in that stillness. One—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—ten—eleven. It was striking the hour of midnight. And another. Thirteen.

Dr. Ebhart had come back to the car and was about to get into the driving seat. The man was just passing him in the road. Thirteen. Dr. Ebhart stopped with his foot on the running-board. The man had stopped as well.

"Did you happen to count the chimes of that clock?" asked Dr. Ebhart involuntarily.

"Yes, I did," said the man.

"Did you hear it strike thirteen?"

"Yes."

"Extraordinary. Have you ever heard a clock strike thirteen before?"

"Never."

"Peculiar," said Dr. Ebhart. "Good night."

"Good night," said the other.

No more.

As he got into his car Dr. Ebhart watched the dark figure now stained faintly red with the beam of the rear lamp, moving on into the night over Tewkesbury. Or was it Gloucester?

Peculiar to consider that fortuitous meeting. Two human beings of the same race, of similar human instincts and passions and emotions, meeting that moment at midnight and commenting no more upon their respective interests than that a church clock had struck thirteen. Peculiar

# ROAD

But Dr Ebhart was too tired to stay and consider these peculiarities at that hour in the night air He drove on. Turned off the main road to the little village of Tredington In five minutes he had put his car away and was mounting the stairs to his room Glad to get to bed

THE Vicar lowered his head and looked over the top of his spectacles at Dr Ebhart when he reported the peculiar affair of the clock

'Struck thirteen?' he repeated, incredulously

'Thirteen,' replied Dr Ebhart.

At what time was this? Oh, yes, of course, midnight, you say

From his tone of voice as he spoke the word, midnight might have been a mysterious, if not discreditable, dimension For thirty years, since he had taken the living at Tredington, the Vicar had never been awake at that hour If ever he heard the church clock strike ten he was in the habit of asking his wife if she were awake. If she did not answer, he would repeat the question To which, not infrequently, she would reply —

What's the matter?

"I can't get to sleep," he would answer

But in all that thirty years he had never heard the church clock strike eleven Midnight was an unconscionable hour

I'll tell Chandler to have a look at the weights," he said still looking over the top of his spectacles at Dr Ebhart as he went off through the village about his business. Thirteen? The clock never did that in the middle of the day

He told his wife about it, and like him, she repeated the word midnight They looked at each other across the luncheon table

"I suppose," he remarked, "the mind is liable to queer impressions in the still hours

"I hope," suggested his wife, responsively, "that when he has these nocturnal calls, Dr Ebhart doesn't fortify himself against the cold with stimulants."

To which the Vicar replied —

'That suggestion is unworthy of you, my dear"

'But isn't that what you were thinking?' she retorted

It never entered my head,' said he

And beyond this slight marital misunderstanding in the Vicarage that was all that happened. Chandler, the sexton, examined the weights of the clock, and, not that he understood anything of horology reported that everything so far as he could see was in order

The affair was discussed for a few days with various interpretations in Tredington and then by all, including Dr Ebhart was forgotten. It might have been isolated like a falling meteor in that dimension of time in which it occurred

Six months went by and one morning the wind on an early day in June was blowing from a precise corner in the west which disturbed a Gloire de Dijon rose that had reared its head to the window of Dr Ebhart's bedroom. A bud not yet blown was swaying in the breeze. It struck with intermittent blows on the doctor's window pane. The noise was dull, soft, but insistent It inserted itself into that function of Dr Ebhart's sleeping brain of which psychologists know so little and theosophists presume so much Did he hear it? And if he did why at the same time could he not hear the louder ticking of a clock on his mantelpiece? Probably because the sound was unusual It was unusual Never before in that early summer had the wind been exactly in that quarter so that, passing through a gap between a cedar and a copper beech in the

By

TEMPLE THURSTON

*Illustrated by* GORDON NICOLL

garden, it just oscillated that bud, newly shot on the Gloire de Dijon rose.

However it contrived to penetrate to what, for want of a better definition, must be called the sleeping consciousness of Dr Ebhart, and he awoke. He looked at the clock on the mantelpiece. It was not yet six.

At any other time he might have been annoyed at the disturbance, but the evening before he had retired to bed at the normal hour when all Trecarrel sought its rest. He had slept nearly eight hours. He was refreshed. It was a glorious morning. The sun was high above the elm trees. He got out of bed, went to the window, and threw open the sash.

Buttercups and daisies [illegible] glittering in the meadows that would soon be hayfields across the road. Cattle had commenced their grazing. There was that sparkle in the air which for a further hour would yield the sensation to human susceptibility that the world belonged to man and not to mankind.

If it had been an hour later, Dr Ebhart would have dressed, rung the bell, told the servant to tell the man to have his horse ready and gone for a constitutional ride before breakfast. Regretfully, he looked round at the clock. It was not yet six. More than another hour. And then as he looked back again out of the window, across the willowed meadows to the distant blue of Bredon Hill, he heard the sound of horse's hoofs with their hollow clatter on the cobbles in the yard. The sound turned by the stable entrance into the road.

It was his horse. The man was riding it. He called out of the window —

"What are you doing at this time of the morning, William?"

"Just giving her a little exercise, sir."

"But why so early?"

"Well, I heard her stamping in the stable. It woke me up. Lovely morning. As if she was asking for it. So I got up."

Dr Ebhart was conscious of a feeling of excitement, of—as well he might be—of a sensation of fulfilment.

"Keep her there," he called out. "I'll be down in five minutes. I'll take her out myself."

In ten minutes the

swaying, warm body of the animal was beneath, and in sympathetic contact with his own body. The friendly clatter of hoofs on the road was amiably disturbing the finches in the hedgerows. The Herefordshire shorthorns were looking up with white mask-like faces from their grazing as Dr Ebhart went by in that early June morning.

*"I'm not saying anything against the justice of my trial," the prisoner began. There was still a hope in his voice. "I am only still protesting my innocence."*

Scarcely after six. More than two hours till breakfast. Where to go? He let the reins fall on the horse's neck and sat a moment planning a suitable excursion. The road to Gloucester had broad grass tracks at either side. It was comfortable riding. The city was eight miles away. Easy to come and go. But was the city of Gloucester worth riding to in the early morning?

He was pondering upon what he should do while the horse was moving a step at a time. Till she stood at a gate entering into a disused lane. In the days of the Wars of the Roses it had been a road from Tewkesbury, long since grown in with grass into the meadows. But there still were the banks and the elm trees that marked its passage and between which the hosts of York drove the hosts of Lancaster to the routing dismay of defeat. It was as though she heard the neighing cries of those ghosts of horses, and the hollow stampede of their clattering

hoofs in the mud. She stood at the gate and whinnied. But there was no horse near.

"Want to go that way, old lady?" he said.

She tossed her head.

"Ah, right, then. You take me for a change."

And he leant over her neck and lifted the latch with the crook of the hazel switch he carried.

Sometimes the road disappeared altogether in the fields. The banks had been levelled down by ploughshares. The elms had been felled. But it was to be picked up again through field gates and between gaps in boundary hedges.

As he pursued it Dr. Ebhart remembered that towards Gloucester it led past the outer paddocks of John Caxton's house. The old Tudor mansion that might well, with some of its walls and gables, have been standing there that day in May when the routed Lancastrian forces thundered by.

He had not seen John Caxton for two years. A busy barrister who clung to a life in the country in defiance of the fact that his work was in Town. Always between cases, in term time and sometimes on circuit, he was at home. The Gloucester Assizes were sitting. Ten to one he would be there. Dr. Ebhart took the reins more firmly between his fingers and pushed on down the damp lane.

Breakfast with John Caxton and his wife? Why not? He had nothing to do that morning. If anyone did call at the surgery he could ring through and tell them where he was. There must be some moments of spontaneous liberty in a man's life. Even a doctor's. He was being infected by the sensation at that hour of the morning that the world belonged to him. Damn mankind. For the next few hours mankind could look after itself. He rode on, smiling.

The dogs were up and barking in Limpsfield Manor as he rode across the paddock. A maid was shaking a duster out of a mullioned window. There was a faint and friendly scent of fried bacon at the hall door.

"Is Mr. Caxton at home?"

The man shook his head.

"No, sir. He was yesterday. The assizes are on in Gloucester. But he had to go up to Town last night. He's coming back by the first train to Gloucester this morning. He'll be here again this evening."

"Is Mrs. Caxton here?"

"Oh, yes, sir. Madam's here."

"Ask her if she'd like Dr. Ebhart to have breakfast with her. Say I've ridden over from Tredington. Fine morning. Wanted a little exercise. Just thought I'd look in to see if any of them were at home."

Fried bacon and poached eggs on a copper heater standing on a Cromwellian sideboard in an oak panelled room, and a delightful lady relieved from the thought of having breakfast by herself. It was a pleasant change. As pleasant as it was unpremeditated.

"Woke by pure chance. Wished I could go for a ride. Looked out of the window. There was the horse with my man going for a bit of exercise. Dressed. Didn't know where to go. Let her take her head. She looked down the old Tewkesbury lane, and here I am."

"John'll be so sorry to have missed you."

He shrugged his shoulders. Couldn't be helped.

"It's only once in a blue moon that a doctor has a chance of following his fancy."

"Couldn't you stay on and have lunch? Wait till this afternoon. His case may be over before three o'clock. Sooner, perhaps. He'll come back at once."

And he would have liked to have seen John Caxton. But that kind of indefinite programme was not for his enjoyment.

"I'm more or less free for this morning, but I can't play skittles with the whole day. What's his case?"

"A murder."

"First day?"

"No, second."

"Know anything about it?"

"No."

"Oh, they don't leave the tail end of murder cases hanging over till the next morning. Hardly fair on the poor devil who's got the rope round his neck. You may be sure it won't finish till this afternoon."

"He'll be awfully sorry to have missed you. You never come over and see us, and he has such a little time when he's at home."

"So am I sorry."

"Well, come over in the car this morning and see him. Have lunch with us in Gloucester. I'll drive you back directly after. We shall have an hour together. Telephone home and tell them you'll be back at three."

He laughed.

"Everything I'm doing to-day," he said, "is being done for me."

COUNSEL'S wife could, of course, come into the court. And her friend. But there was only standing room.

"Lot of excitement about this case," said the constable at the door. "He's been tryin' to prove an alibi, and it don't look to me as if he's done it. Jury 'ave been out two hours, but they say they're just coming back."

They squeezed into the crowd and stood

in the permeating silence that falls like a shroud over the court in a murder trial when the jury's return is expected. Counsel were seated in their places. Dr. Ebhart could just see a slanting angle of John Caxton's sharp-featured face.

A SUDDEN turning of heads in the court seemed to make a sound without substance, an abstract noise of expectation as the prisoner came into the dock.

From where they were standing they could only see the back of his head. It was stiffly held on the shoulders, as though the neck muscles were in constant flex, and yet there was a defiant angle about it.

'John hasn't told me anything about the case,' Mrs. Caxton whispered to her companion, 'except that it's the murder of a woman. Rather beastly, I believe. But he says this man's innocent. Feels he is, and yet he doesn't think he's going to get him off.'

A tramping of feet announced the return of the jury. They filed into their places. Ten men and two women. The prisoner's head was turned towards them. From where he was Dr. Ebhart could look at their faces. The women's eyes were cast down. The men were looking about the court as though by a simulation of interest they could hide their secret.

Everyone rose to their feet and the judge in his scarlet entered the court.

Again everyone was seated. The faint rustling of papers made a whisper in the court, and then was still. The usher's voice with its questioned formula was speaking.

The foreman of the jury stood to his feet.

'We find the prisoner guilty, my lord.'

No shred of doubt. No recommendation to mercy. A moment before the word had not been spoken, and now, once uttered, could not be taken back. The prisoner's head turned on the tight swivel of his neck to face the judge.

It was all over. Yet still the deadly word had to be spoken. The judge pulled back the cuffs of his robe and laid his hands on the desk before him. The acute activity of his brain was now dispensed with as a speed that is put out of gear. He had conducted his summing-up of the case to that end, and the end had been reached. There was nothing more for him to do but address the prisoner as he had addressed many another wretched man in similar circumstances, and then when that foolish black silk thing was put upon his head, pronounce sentence.

His voice was distant, emotionless, precise.

'James Hickman,' he said, 'you have been found, and in my opinion, rightly found, guilty by the jury of a terrible and a brutal crime. The only offer of your defence, most ably conducted by your learned counsel, was that of an alibi. If you could have proved you were in some other place at that one moment when the crime was committed, the verdict undoubtedly would have been other than it is. Your relations with the murdered woman have been admitted by your counsel. The motive has been clearly established, the deed traced to the implement in your possession. All you can say is that you were not in the City of Gloucester till two o'clock that night, but you have been unable to bring any witness to substantiate your story. I will not, however, distress your feelings by any further delay of mine. Have you anything to say?'

The last word fell like a leaf fluttering from a tree and lying in silence on the ground.

Dr. Ebhart looked at the back of the prisoner's head. It was rigid. Had he nothing to say? Had the hope of life already left him? Was there ever a moment when the human mind accepted the inevitable in silence? No. He was beginning to speak.

'I'm not saying anything against the justice of my trial,' he began.

There was hope in his voice. Still a hope. For what? Against that once spoken word of the jury and the clear approval of the judge what hope could a man have? What miracle of God's mercy or the unknown mysteries of life did he imagine could save him then?

'I am only still protesting my innocence. Your lordship says I have produced no witness to prove my alibi. How could I produce him? How could I find him? I still swear on my oath, as I did in the witness-box, that somewhere in the country, unless he's left it or unless he's dead, there is this man I met that night on the road. I never saw him before. I've never seen him since. I know it sounds flimsy. Almost preposterous. But I'll swear that we stood there while a church clock somewhere struck thirteen, and then he drove on into the darkness.'

The prisoner's head was loose on his neck. He was leaning forward in the dock, importunately seizing the moment of delay before the sentence should be passed over him.

Dr. Ebhart was conscious of hearing that despairing hopelessness in the prisoner's voice as he uttered those last words – 'into the darkness.'

Then, it was a purely involuntary act. The last of the involuntary acts he was to perform that day.

Dr. Ebhart was thrusting his way through the crowd.

# THE HOUSE WITH

## 'SAPPER'

*ILLUSTRATED*

"A YOUNG LADY to see you, sir. Here is her card."

With a frown of annoyance Ronald Standish put down the golf bag he had just picked up and took the bit of pasteboard from his man.

"That's a nuisance, Bob," he said to me, and then he raised his eyebrows. "Miss Nancy Millington. I wonder if she's any relation of Tom Millington whom I've played cricket with. Show her in, Sayers."

The butler left the room and a moment later he ushered in a pretty girl of about twenty-five who looked from one to the other of us in doubt.

"I wonder no longer," said Ronald with a laugh. "And what can I do for Tom Millington's sister?"

"How did you know?" she cried, surprised.

"My dear Miss Millington, you're as alike as two peas. How is the old lad?"

"He's very well, Mr. Standish, and it was he who told me to come to you. He thinks I'm a half-wit for bothering you at all, and I'm not at all sure I don't think the same myself now that I'm here."

"Take a pew, bless you," said Ronald, "and let's hear all about it. Incidentally, this is Bob Miller."

"It all seems so trivial and stupid," she began, "when one starts to put it into words, that probably you'll laugh at me the same as Tom did. But I can't help it. I feel I've got to get it off my chest. He and I, as perhaps you know, Mr. Standish, live together. We've got a house down at West Bilsington, which is a little village not far from Pulborough in Sussex. Tom does a bit of farming in the intervals of playing cricket, and we've been there about four years.

Most of the houses round us are small cottages belonging to labourers, in fact, the only big one in the neighbourhood is the rectory, which is a great barn of a place. And it is about the rectory that I've come to see you. A year ago the old vicar died. He was a man with considerable private means, and an awfully good sort. He and his wife used to do a lot of entertaining in a mild way—tennis and that sort of thing, and so, when he pegged out we were all of us very concerned as to who was going to take his place.

Well, I don't know how these things are arranged, but the next incumbent, or whatever they call it, hadn't got a bean to bless himself with. He's an extraordinarily nice man, and his wife is charming, but they found they couldn't possibly afford to live in the rectory. You want at least four servants, and they simply couldn't run to it. So they put it in the house agent's hands, with no result until two months ago when a Mrs. Hamilton took it, and the vicar and his wife moved into a cottage.

Somewhat naturally, as you can guess, we were all very anxious to see the lady. The tennis court is the only decent one for miles, and we hoped the old *régime* would start again. Which is where we were disappointed. A week after Mrs. Hamilton arrived we discovered she was mad on dogs, and proposed to start kennels. She hung up notices all over the place to say that dogs would be taken in and boarded, and proceeded to cover the lawn with wired-in runs

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# THE KENNELS

*"She turned white with fury, and for a moment I actually thought she was going to hit me"*

BY JACK M. FAULKS

for them. And in addition to that she actually brought half-a-dozen dogs of all varieties of breeds with her. I'm afraid all this is very boring,' she added, apologetically, "but I must begin at the beginning."

Tell it your own way, Miss Millington, said Ronald.

"As you can imagine," she continued, "in a small village like ours everybody knows pretty well everything about everybody else. The butcher or someone passes things on to the cook and she does the rest. And it soon became known that Mrs. Hamilton's *menage* was rather a funny one. For one thing, she had nothing but men servants; for another, two of them, at least, were foreigners. Of course, there was nothing in that."

"Just one moment, Miss Millington," interrupted Ronald. "What aged woman is this Mrs. Hamilton?"

"Forty—forty-five," said the girl.

"And is she English?"

"I wouldn't swear to it," she answered. "She speaks English perfectly, but once or twice it has seemed to me that she's got the trace of an accent."

"Is there a Mr. Hamilton?"

"If there is, he hasn't been down there, to my knowledge."

"I see," said Ronald. "Please go on."

"Another thing that soon became obvious was that she was a very unsociable sort of woman. I gave her a fortnight to settle in, and then I went to call. She was quite polite and returned it a week later, but one could tell at once that it was only because she had to, and that she didn't intend to let it go any further. Not that I wanted it to, but she is our next-door neighbour, and in a little place like that one naturally wants to be friendly. She is always quite pleasant if she's on the lawn and I happen to be passing, but she definitely gives you the impression that it's a case of bare politeness, and that she wishes to goodness you'd go away. The trouble is that I'm absolutely devoted to dogs, and I never can resist having a look at them when I go past the gate. Which is what caused the first thing that has brought me here to-day."

"Three weeks ago I was going into the village and, glancing to the lawn, I saw her with a new arrival—a perfectly topping Irish terrier."

"What a beauty!" I cried. 'What's his name?'

"Cheaper," she said. "Because I got him cheaper than I expected."

"The jest, I admit, was feeble, but it was such an extraordinary thing for her to make a joke at all that I went in and joined her.

"He is a good dog," she went on. "Quite the best Airedale I've seen for a long while."

I stared at her in amazement.

"'But, Mrs. Hamilton,' I cried, 'he's not an Airedale, he's an Irish terrier.'"

The girl paused for a moment, as if searching for the right words.

"'I don't want to exaggerate, Mr. Standish,'" she went on, after a while, "'but the effect was literally amazing. Admittedly it was an incredible error for a dog-lover to make, but one would have expected her to laugh it off, or to pretend that she'd been fooling. After all, there is a certain similarity between the two breeds. It's not like mistaking a pug for a mastiff.'

"She turned white with fury, and for a moment I actually thought she was going to hit me. A look came into her eyes that was positively venomous, and I stepped back a pace. And then she recovered herself.

"'Of course,' she said, with a forced laugh. "How stupid of me.'

"I stayed on a few more minutes, then I left. And the more I thought over it the more I wondered. How could anyone who is keen on dogs make such a mistake? And why the fury when it was pointed out? Because I hadn't imagined it, Mr. Standish; I can assure you of that."

"I talked it over with Tom, and he poohpoohed the whole thing. He seemed to think that the lady had a bad temper naturally, and was furious with herself at being caught out. Which was all right as far as it went, but it didn't answer my difficulty. How could a *genuine* dog-lover be caught out over such a thing?"

Ronald nodded, and I could see he was interested.

"And having got as far as that," continued the girl, "I went a bit farther. Was she a genuine dog-lover, and if she wasn't, what on earth was the object of all this elaborate pretence of kennels? Again Tom laughed at me. His contention, and I admit it is difficult to answer, was that no one but a congenital idiot would rent the rectory at a place like West Bissington and instal dogs all over the lawn unless they were fond of animals. If she wanted to bury herself here, why couldn't she do it without the dogs?"

"I can think of two very good reasons," said Ronald, quietly, "but it's early days yet. This happened, you say, three weeks ago. I suppose something further has occurred since?"

"Yesterday," she answered, promptly. "And it was that that decided me to come and see you. It may be all rot. Tom shrieked with laughter when I told him, and probably you will too. I was passing

the gate of the rectory about eleven o'clock in the morning, and I stopped as I nearly always do to have a look at the dogs. Suddenly, I don't know why, I happened to glance up at the house. And there, pressed against one of the top windows, was a face. The sun was shining on the room, and so I could see the features clearly and the expression of fear and terror on them. Then in a flash the face had gone almost as if it had been dragged away by someone behind."

"Man or woman?" asked Ronald.

"An elderly man," she said. "I stayed there as long as I could, wondering if he would reappear, but he didn't."

Ronald lit a cigarette thoughtfully.

"Let's get this straight, Miss Millington," he said. "The lawn is between the road and the house, so the house must be a considerable distance from where you were standing. Now can you really be sure that the expression on this man's face was one of fear and terror?"

"Just what Tom said," she answered. "In my own mind, Mr. Standish, I am perfectly sure. As I told you, the sun was shining on him, and in that momentary glimpse he stood out as clear as a photograph. Tom says that it is one of the servants who is sick, and, of course, he may be right. But if ever a man was appealing for help, that man was, I'm sure of it. So much so in fact that I very nearly told our local policeman when I got into the village. And then I thought I'd better ask Tom's advice first."

"I don't think the policeman would have been much use," agreed Ronald. "Your evidence is a little too thin, isn't it, for official action?"

"But you do believe me, don't you, Mr. Standish?"

"I certainly believe all you've told me," answered Ronald. "But what interpretation to put on it is a different matter. Terror and great pain might look much the same at a distance, and Tom's theory about the sick servant is quite possibly correct. Again, Mrs. Hamilton's anger over her mistake about the Airedale is also capable of an innocent solution."

"Which means you think there's nothing in it!" she cried, with keen disappointment in her voice.

"Not at all," Ronald assured her. "I am merely trying to show you that we mustn't be too hasty in jumping to conclusions—which is just what you, bless your heart, have done. You are convinced that Mrs. Hamilton is a fraud, to put it mildly, and that she and her gang of servants are holding some man prisoner, and probably torturing him."

He laughed, and after a moment she laughed too.

"Put like that it does seem a bit absurd," she confessed. "And, as Tom says, it would be ridiculous if she is a fraud to bother about the dogs."

"Now that," said Ronald, "is where I entirely disagree with Tom, for two reasons, as I said before. Either the whole thing is completely innocent, and you've made a crashing blooper, or something very like my melodramatic picture is the truth. As you rightly remarked in a tiny place like that everybody is intensely curious, and if this Mrs. Hamilton is playing some deep game it is essential for her to have an occupation which will account for her being there."

"But why dogs, if she knows nothing about 'em?" I put in.

"Reason number two," he answered. "If there are dirty doings going on in the house what better guardians could she possibly find than a bunch of dogs that bark the place down if a stranger approaches the door? Especially at night."

"You're quite right, Mr. Standish," said the girl. "They make the most awful row. So you do think there's something in it?" she added.

"'Pon my Sam, Miss Millington, I don't know. I should say it's about a fifty-fifty chance. But I'll tell you what I'll do, if you like. Can you put Bob and me up for two or three nights?"

"Of course," she cried. "Only too delighted."

"Good. Then he and I will arrive with golf clubs complete, ostensibly to play round those very excellent links near Puborough. And in the intervals of so doing we will cast a discerning eye on the denizens of the rectory."

"How splendid!" she said. "I'm so glad, Mr. Standish. Because I'm certain there is something wrong."

"Do you really think there is anything in it?" I asked when she had gone.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"On the one hand we have woman's intuition, which is never a thing to be sneezed at, on the other some bright new golf. So, old lad, we score either way."

THERE would have been no mistaking the rectory even without the dogs on the lawn. The only large house in the village, it stood some forty yards back from the road and about the same distance from the church, from which it was separated by an old wall with a wicket gate in it. Trees ran along the rectory side of the wall, on the other lay part of the churchyard. So much was obvious as we drove slowly past, and then, just as we

*'To my alarm and annoyance he went up to the old chap.*

*'Have you got the sketch the gentleman threw away?" he shouted.*

'We are a bit of one

There was no one in the garden but he pointed to the notice board for the benefit of anybody who might be watching from the house and led the way up to the front door Immediately all the dogs started barking furiously and I saw a curtain shake in one of the end rooms We were b[illegible]

I see from the notice [illegible] said to the man who opened the door that you are prepared to receive dogs and board them Can I see the owner of the place?

I will find out if she is in" answered the man speaking with a pronounced foreign accent He was a saturnine-looking fellow dark-skinned and swarthy and I put him down as an Italian

He was away some time before he returned to say that Mrs. Hamilton would receive us, and to my surprise he seemed considerably agitated However we followed him through the hall to a room at the back of the house where we found the lady sitting at a desk writing She rose as we entered

I was just motoring past madam," said Ronald with a bow, and I happened to catch sight of your notice I have a terrier in London, for whom I want to find a happy home for the next six months while I am abroad. Would you be prepared to take him?

'Certainly" she answered "My terms are half a guinea a week

They continued talking details for a time whilst I glanced round the room It was just what one would have expected to find in such a house—sunny and comfortable

and the conviction began to grow on me that Miss Millington had made a mistake. Outside was another stretch of lawn with more dogs on it, and beyond that lay the kitchen garden.

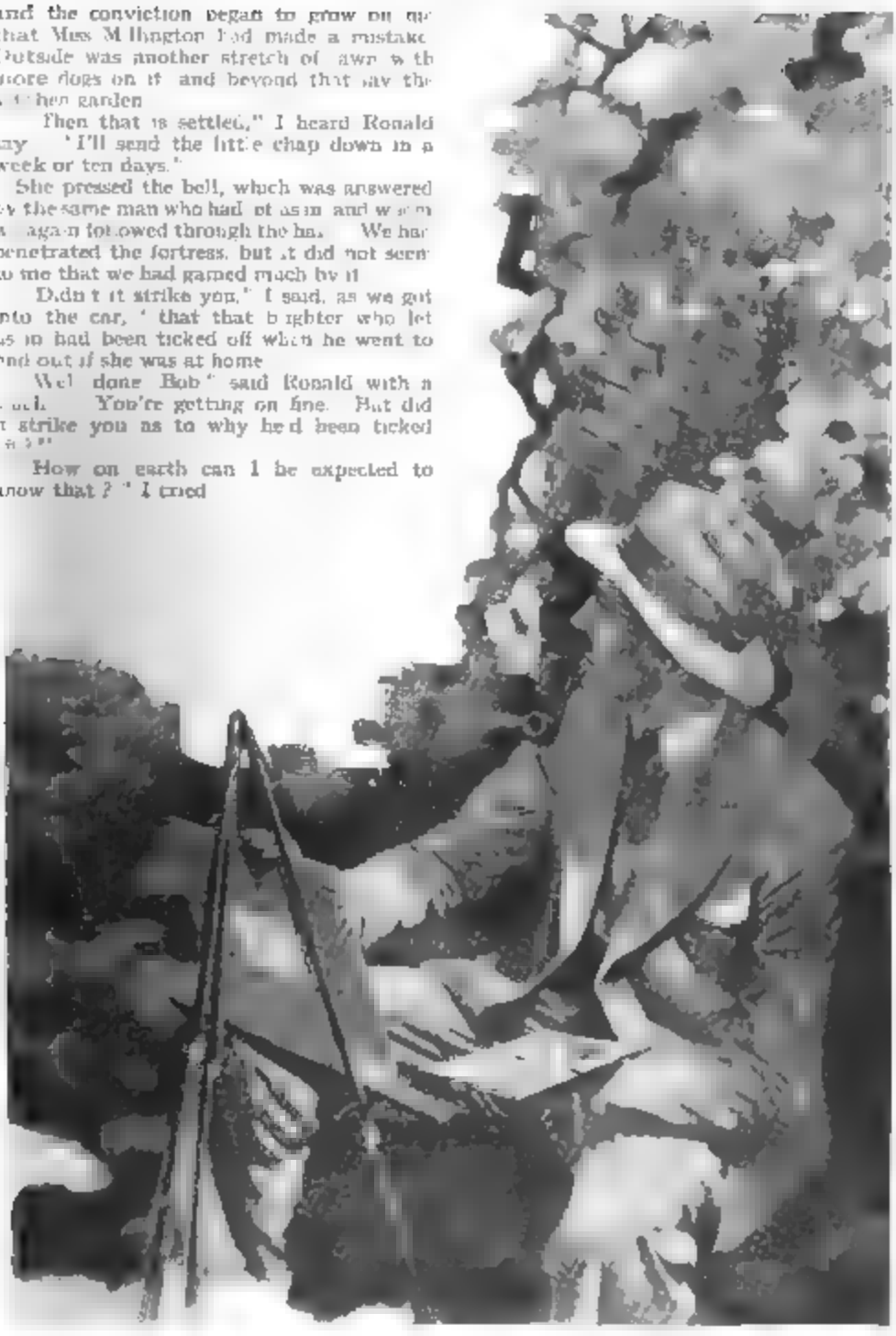
"Then that is settled," I heard Ronald say. "I'll send the little chap down in a week or ten days."

She pressed the bell, which was answered by the same man who had let us in, and we all again followed through the hall. We had penetrated the fortress, but it did not seem to me that we had gained much by it.

"Didn't it strike you," I said, as we got into the car, "that that blighter who let us in had been ticked off when he went to find out if she was at home?"

"Well done, Bob," said Ronald with a laugh. "You're getting on fine. But did it strike you as to why he'd been ticked off?"

"How on earth can I be expected to know that?" I cried.



'Didn't you notice any difference in his appearance when he returned to say that Mrs. Hamilton would see me?'

'I can't say that I did."

'Not so good, old boy. When he opened the door to us he was not wearing gloves. When he came back he was.'

One of her rules, I suppose, and he'd forgotten.'

Did you see his nails?

'No. I didn't. What was the matter with them?'

He did not answer for a time, and when he did it was about something completely different.

Is it possible," he said, that anybody could seriously think that a terrier eats a pound of dog biscuits twice a day? For that is what I told the lady my mythical hound consumed, and she swallowed it hook, bait, and sinker. I must say she was at pains to inform me that all practical details were left to the kennelman, but even so, Bob—a terrier, and two pounds of biscuits a day is a bit hot.

Then you do think the show is crooked?"

"I said fifty-fifty to Miss Millington. Now——"

He fell into a brown study, which continued till we reached the Millingtons' house.

"The devil of it," he said as he stopped the engine, "is that we've got no excuse for going back there again, and it will be the deuce of a job to reconnoitre that house with dogs fore and aft, so to speak. I'd no idea she had more at the back."

TOM MILLINGTON came out to greet us grinning all over his face, and Ronald introduced me to him.

"Delighted to see you,' he cried. 'But I never thought Nancy would catch an old bird like you, Ronald, with her mare's nest.'

Ronald smiled but said nothing, and we followed Millington into the house, where we were joined by his sister.

Here are your wretched dupes, Nancy," he said. "The least you can do for them is to produce some whisky and soda."

What time does the post go out?" asked Ronald.

Six o'clock," said Millington. "You've plenty of time to catch it."

"Good. Well, Miss Millington, I've interviewed your girl friend.'

"You've seen Mrs. Hamilton," she cried. "How did you manage that?"

'I am sending her a non-existent terrier in a few days which eats two pounds of biscuits a day. At least I told her so, and she didn't dispute the fact.'

For a moment she looked bewildered. Then she turned triumphantly on her brother.

'There you are, Tom. I knew she was a fraud."

'Just because she knows nothing about dogs doesn't prove she's a wrong 'un," he said, obstinately.

It doesn't prove it,' agreed Ronald. But from one or two little things I saw I think the betting on it is quite sufficient for me to write to Scotland Yard and make a few inquiries on the matter. Only I must beg of you to say nothing about it to anyone. If we're wrong, it's the most libellous thing to do. If we're right we don't want the smallest chance of giving the alarm. Which is why I do not propose to post the letter in the village box. The local postman would probably die of heart failure.'

Let's go and have a round,' said Millington, now definitely impressed, 'and we can post it on the way there. But what on earth can they be up to in a place like this?'

"That remains to be seen, old boy," answered Ronald. "Mrs. Hamilton and the man who opened the door are both new ones on me, so I've got no ideas as to their line of country. But if one of my surmises is correct I think I could hazard a pretty shrewd guess."

And more than that he refused to say, though we were all itching with curiosity. We played golf that evening, and two rounds the next day, and never once did he allude to the matter. And then on the following morning came the reply from the Yard.

Blank," said Ronald after he had read it. "Nothing is known about them. And I'm afraid I rather expected it. However, the point that now arises is what we're going to do about it—if anything.'

We must do something," cried the girl. If they are criminals we can't let them stay on at the rectory.'

If you can tell me of any method by which we can turn 'em out," laughed Ronald, "we'll get down to it. We haven't got a vestige of proof, and if we managed to get into the house in search of it it's we who become the criminals. No, Miss Millington, I fear it's no go at present. So I think I will go back to London and make a few further inquiries, leaving Bob if you can bear him to hold the fort at this end.'

"We'd love Mr. Miller to stay on," she said, 'but I could tell she was disappointed.

Keep your eyes skinned, Bob,' said Ronald. "See without being seen, and don't let 'em suspect you."

Which was all very fine and large as I said to the girl after he had gone. How on

earth was I to see without being seen? I could not stand at the front gate, nor could I walk backwards and forwards past it for hours on end. A hiding place in the grounds was out of the question because of the dogs, so that altogether it seemed a somewhat tall order. And then at lunch she had a brain wave.

Do you, by any chance, sketch, Mr Miller?

Not so that you'd notice it,' I said. Why?

Because if you could sufficiently well do to make it ridiculous, I thought you might sit in the churchyard and draw the church. Then you'd have at any rate two sides of the house under observation."

Now, as a matter of fact, as a schoolboy I had done a certain amount of sketching in a mild way, and the advantages of her suggestion were obvious. The trouble was that if I had been very mild, and my fear was that my effort would be so crude that anyone seeing it would know I was an impostor. Still, it seemed the only possibility, and after lunch we drove into Horsham for the necessary paraphernalia. Then, having obtained permission from the vicar, I proceeded to the churchyard.

ONE difficulty immediately presented itself. To even the most inexperienced eye there was only one feasible spot in which to set up my easel from the point of view of drawing the church, and that spot was utterly unsuitable from the point of view of watching the rectory. However, undeterred by trifles of that sort, I selected a place which gave me the best observation post for the house and commenced work under the rheumy gaze of an incredibly old man who was pottering round tending the graves.

It was a beautifully warm afternoon and soon began to feel infernally sleepy. What little cunning my hand had ever possessed seemed to have completely gone, and my preliminary effort looked like a cross between a Martello tower and a drunken lighthouse. The old man was enormously enthralled.

Have 'e done much in that line, sir?' he mumbled, after he had inspected it long and carefully.

Not for some time," I answered, with what dignity I could, hoping fervently that my audience would not increase.

He cupped his hand round his ear.

What do 'e say?' he remarked. 'I be terrible 'ard of 'earing.

I said not for some time. I told him in a loud voice, and even as I spoke I realized that a man was watching me intently from one of the top windows of the rectory. He was not the one who had let Ronald and me in when we had called on Mrs. Hamilton, but he also looked like a foreigner. For an appreciable time he stood there staring at me. Then as suddenly as he had appeared he vanished, and a few moments later I saw him come out of the front door and walk towards the wicket gate. Evidently he was going to speak to me, which was the last thing I wanted. One glance at the effusion I had produced would give the whole show away. There was only one thing to be done, and I did it. I tore off the sheet, crumpled it into a ball and threw it away.

A fine day for sketching,' he remarked, as he came up. 'And an excellent subject.

Which, I fear, I did but scant justice to with my first attempt,' I answered, lighting a cigarette. 'In fact, I have thrown it away.

What a pity,' he said. 'I would have liked to have seen it.

He was looking round, and my heart sank. What on earth was I going to do if he picked it up and opened it? And suddenly, to my amazement, I realized it was no longer there. It had fallen between two graves, and now there was no sign of it. And then it dawned on me what had happened. The ancient had picked it up.

Yonder octogenarian has removed the outrage,' I said lightly.

" I really must see it,' he remarked with a smile. 'I assure you I am no mean critic. Hi—you!'

The old man took not the slightest notice, but continued pottering about with his hoe.

He's as deaf as a post,' I said. 'But I am not at all anxious for it to be seen. It is altogether too bad.

Artistic modesty,' he cried, and to my alarm and annoyance he went up to the old chap. Which was devilish awkward. We could not have a bellowing match in the churchyard.

Have you got the sketch the gentleman threw away?' he shouted.

Aye, sir, it's a beautiful day,' wheezed the other. 'Just what we want at cherry-picking time.

The sketch that you picked up, you old ass.

The grass, sir. Maybe that could do with a drop of rain. Which reminds me," he chuckled, 'that I could do with a drop of summat myself. 'Tis powerful thirsty weather.'

He hobbled away down the path, and I burst out laughing at the other's discomfiture. He looked completely nonplussed. And then the more sinister aspect struck me. Why was he so keen to inspect

this sketch of mine that he had even displayed considerable bad taste over the matter? If ever a man had been told plainly that I did not want it looked at he had. And yet he had persisted. If he was so anxious to find out whether I was a genuine artist, it followed that he had reasons for fearing I might not be. Which was yet another proof that things were going on in the house which he wished to conceal. But he had quite recovered himself when he rejoined me.

"He certainly is a little hard of hearing," he remarked, genially.

"Are you also interested in dogs?" I inquired.

"I fear not," he answered. "It is my aunt's hobby. Aren't you going to sketch any more?"

I had risen and started to pack up.

"Not to-day," I said. "I'm just beginning to think that our elderly friend's idea of a drop of summat has much to commend it."

I did not tell him that as nothing would induce me to draw a line under his eye there did not seem much object in prolonging the interview. Mrs. Hamilton was walking about amongst the dogs, it seemed unlikely that I should find out anything more. And so I left him standing there and started home. Did he suspect me? That was the point. Most certainly I suspected him; but was the converse true? His attempt to test me had been foiled by the old man's deafness. What was the final result in his mind?

"Aunt!" scoffed Nancy Millington, when I told them about it. "I don't believe it."

"I admit I've seldom seen two people who are less alike," I agreed. "Still, I don't see that that has much bearing on it either way!"

"It's another proof that they're crooked," she cried. "Why should he pretend to be her nephew when he isn't?"

"Hold hard, old soul," said her brother with a grin. "It is just possible, you know, that she is his aunt."

"Any message from Ronald?" I asked.

"Not a word," said the girl, and shortly after we all went to dress for dinner, a meal at which we endeavoured without conspicuous success to keep the conversation off the rectory.

It was the sudden furious barking of all the dogs at about eleven o'clock that gave Tom Millington the idea.

"What about doing a little observation by night from the churchyard, Miller? There's no moon, and it's nice and warm. We might find out something."

"I'm quite on," I said. "Let's go and change into some other clothes. And we'd better wear rubber shoes."

His sister wanted to come too, but with brotherly frankness he informed her that she would merely be a damned nuisance. And so half an hour later we two men found ourselves crouching amongst the graves as near to the wicket gate as we could get. The top rooms of the rectory on the side facing us were in darkness, though light was streaming out from two windows in front.

NOT a breath of wind stirred; the night was absolutely still. The village, a few hundred yards down the road, was long since asleep. And I was just beginning to feel a strong craving for a cigarette, when with disconcerting suddenness a light went on in one of the downstairs rooms in front of us. A man, clearly visible through some thin curtains, had just come in, and I edged nearer Millington.

"That's my bird of this afternoon," I whispered.

He crossed to the french windows and flung them open, whilst we shrank back, though it was out of the question for him to see us as we were well in the shadow. For some time he stood there silhouetted against the light, and the smell of his cigar came to us distinctly.

"Nothing much the matter with that weed," breathed Millington in my ear. "Why can't the bally man go and smoke it somewhere else? It's making me envious."

Suddenly he swung round. Another man—the servant who had admitted Ronald and me—had entered the room carrying something in his hand. It looked like a piece of white paper, and he put it on the table. Then both men pored over it in silence for some minutes. At length my acquaintance of the afternoon produced a magnifying glass from his pocket, and continued his examination through that. And he was just straightening up when there came a startling interruption. A man's scream, instantly suppressed, rang through the night. And it came from the house.

With a snarl of rage my acquaintance dropped the magnifying glass and sprang to the door, followed by his companion. And in a flash Tom Millington was on his feet.

"Come on, Miller," he muttered. "I'm not standing for this. That scream was one of mortal terror."

We rushed through the wicket gate, and into the room. The door was open, and heedless of what noise we made we raced up the stairs. The passage was lit, and as we passed one of the rooms a pitiful

*In the woman's hand was a hypodermic syringe.*
*"What is the meaning of this monstrous intrusion?" she cried*

moaning sound came from it. And Tom Millington without hesitation walked straight in.

For a moment there was dead silence, and we took in the whole scene. Lying in bed was a dazed looking man. Standing over him were Mrs. Hamilton and the two who had been in the room downstairs. And in the woman's hand was a hypodermic syringe. For just a second the sick man's eyes sought ours in an agony of supplication. Then they closed wearily and he sank back on the pillows.

"What is the meaning of this monstrous intrusion?"

Mrs. Hamilton had at length found her voice.

"What is the meaning of that poor devil?" I cried, sternly pointing at the bed.

"By Gosh! it's the — artist!" said her so-called nephew softly, getting between us and the door and ringing the bell.

"How dare you break into my house?" cried the woman, white with anger.

"Cut it out," said Millington, curtly. "When one hears some poor wretch screaming in terror one doesn't stop to ring the front-door bell. Well—what explanation have you?"

Out of the corner of my eye I saw that two more men had entered the room, and an ugly-looking couple of customers they were. Then I turned back to the woman, and just caught a meaning glance that passed between her and her nephew.

"You are evidently under some delusion, Mr. Millington," she remarked in a very different voice from her former one. "I still consider it an outrageous thing for you and your friend to come into my house unannounced at this time of night. But hearing what you did it is perhaps understandable. This poor man is suffering from an agonizing and practically incurable complaint, and the only thing we can do to help him is to give him continuous injections of morphia."

"What doctor is attending him?" said Millington, stubbornly.

"Really, Mr. Millington, I confess I am amazed at your question. What possible business can it be of yours? But if you wish to know, it is a specialist from Brighton. And now I must really request you to go. Otherwise I shall have to ask my nephew to ring for the police."

"Nephew!" came a genial voice from the door, and we all swung round. To my astonishment Ronald was standing there with three other men, one of whom—the speaker—I recognized as Inspector McIver of Scotland Yard.

"Well, well," he continued, "one lives and learns. I didn't know you went in for aunts. So you're up to your old game again, are you, Joe?"

"I don't know what the devil you're talking about, McIver," answered the other suddenly. "You fellows will never give a man any credit for trying to run straight. I'm helping my aunt with her dogs."

"Are you now? And do you feed 'em on these?"

From his pocket McIver produced a piece of paper which I recognized as being similar to the one the two men had been examining downstairs.

"I've struck some damn fool things in my life, Joe," he continued, "but actually to leave one lying about in a sitting room with the window open, wins in a canter."

I looked at the paper more closely. It was a five-pound note. And the next moment we were all of us mixed up in it. With a howl of fury the man called Joe had hurled himself on the footman.

"You thrice damned fool!" he screamed. "You've wrecked everything."

"Not quite," said McIver, when they were finally separated. "But each of you thinking the other had it, saved me a lot of bother. Put the bracelets on all of 'em."

A sergeant entered the room.

"I've found the outfit, sir," he announced, but McIver took no notice. He had gone to the bed, and was staring at the unconscious man. And suddenly he gave a long whistle.

"Blest if it isn't Mr. Symington, the millionaire. He's supposed to have left for Paris three or four days ago. My sainted aunt, Joe, you'll be for it this time good and hearty. Forging bank notes and abduction with violence should keep you occupied at the taxpayer's expense for it's time to redeem the three and a half per cent War Loan."

AND at that instant the sick man opened his eyes.

"Save me," he muttered. "Forging my signature. Stop the cheques."

"All right, sir," said McIver soothingly. "Don't you worry your head about that. We've caught the whole bunch."

"Came down about my dog," whispered the other. "They must have sent faked letters to hotel."

His eyes shut, he seemed to sleep.

"What have you done to him?" said McIver sternly.

The woman shrugged her shoulders, she knew the game was up.

"Nothing serious," she said. "He's only hung full of morphia. I was speaking the truth when I told those guys that."

And then she stared at Ronald.

"What put you wise?" she asked.

Apart from the small matter of Irish terriers and Airedales,' he said, "the fox terrier has yet to be born that eats two pounds of biscuits a day."

But you were wise to that before you left London," I remarked. "What made you wiser?"

It was an hour later, and we were having a final nightcap. Mr Symington had been removed to a nursing home, the prisoners to a less comfortable destination.

When I saw Joe Darlington," he answered, "At least that was the name under which he last enjoyed His Majesty's hospitality. What his real name is I doubt if even he himself knows. He has several aliases, speaks four or five languages fluently, and is a natural criminal. And to think that he would sit in the country on a dog farm was to think the unthinkable. So I knew the show was crooked, a thing I had only guessed before.

You remember I asked you if you'd noticed that other man's nails when he opened the door. Well, I had, and I'd seen they were stained and discoloured with acid. Such stains may come quite innocently; they may also come very much otherwise. They are almost invariably to be found on a forger's hands, and when I saw them I told you that if anything shady was going on I could give a pretty shrewd guess as to what it was. Seeing Darlington this afternoon made it to my mind a certainty. I don't think he has ever been actually in that line himself, but he would be an invaluable help in getting the notes distributed, which is more than half the battle. So I got on the 'phone to McIver, who arrived about two hours ago with his merry men. And the rest you know. It was luck, of course, each of 'em thinking the other had the dud fiver, but we had them in any case.

But what I still don't understand," I said, "is about this man Joe Darlington. You hadn't seen him before you went to London, so how could you 'phone McIver?"

Ronald grinned gently.

"My dear old boy," he said, "I never went to London. I had the very greatest faith in your ability to bolt any badger there might be. I was tolerably certain you had only to be in the vicinity of the house for half an hour for the suspicions of every inmate to be aroused. And I banked on it."

His voice changed suddenly.

Oi be terrible 'ard of 'earing," he wheezed, producing my crumpled-up sketch from his pocket. "My sainted aunt Bob, it might be anything from a joint of beef to a ship in distress at sea!"

# SOME WONDERS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

## FRANK RUTTER

We live in an adventurous age. In all ages there have been hardy pioneers whose deeds of daring have excited the admiration of mankind yet it may be questioned whether at any previous time there have been so many people who daily take the most tremendous risks as a matter of course and hardly thinking about them, as there are to-day

We are constantly being afforded ocular evidence of the insouciant bravery of modern men and women, but how seldom when we look at the pictorial record of some amazing action, do we pause to consider the enterprise and courage shown by the photographer who has obtained for us this record His part, though secondary is not without honour and if the doer of the deed be a hero deserving the Victoria Cross, there are times when the man with the camera also seems to merit a medal of the second class

Some of the most remarkable of present-day photographs have been taken in the air These aerial photographs have widened the range of our perceptions, they have varied the angles of our vision and they have increased the speed of our reactions Even to those not familiar with the experience of aviation they have revealed a new world

A most unusual photograph of an airman diving into space was recently obtained from an aeroplane over Melbourne Aerodrome, and is reproduced on the opposite page. It shows Lieut J Reece achieving a safe landing by means of an Irvin Air Chute which is in process of opening To aeronauts this record is particularly instructive as illustrating the action of the small auxiliary parachute, called the pilot chute, which is seen drawing the large chute away from the airman before it balloons. This device obviates any danger of entanglement and for some years has been a standard equipment in the Royal Air Force and the American Air Service For though a parachute without the pilot chute attached may open just as quickly as one fitted with it, it is liable to balloon closer to the airman. The pilot chute safeguards the airman as he somersaults freely before the large parachute opens fully and steadies him. But for the enterprise of the Australian photographer who soared into the right position to take this record, we could not have had so lucid an exposition of the action of the Irvin Air Chute.

Then there are times when the photographer is not merely a spectator but is himself the man of action, taking the initiative. Quite a story of adventure lies concealed behind Mr A W Kerr's unusual photograph of the lighthouse, taken during a sixty-miles-an hour gale, from the top of the cliff at Beachy Head. To obtain this picture Mr Kerr had to lie full length on his stomach, getting a friend to sit on his feet, and hang face downwards over the edge of the cliff 533 feet high looking into the top of a reflex camera. This camera necessary in order to obtain the correct

Photograph by the "Argus," Melbourne.

composition of the picture, was fitted with a telephoto-lens, which makes the subject about four times larger than it would appear with the ordinary camera-lens.

Beachy Head Lighthouse was constructed in 1902 to replace the old Belle Toute Light house, which stands on the cliff top a little further to the west. Obstructed by the jutting-out cliffs, the old lighthouse gave only a limited range of light visible. The

*DIVING INTO SPACE.*

*Lieut J Reece diving head-first to make a safe landing in the Melbourne Aerodrome by means of an Irvin Air Chute. The small auxiliary parachute, called the pilot chute, is seen drawing the large chute away from the airman before it balloons, thus obviating danger of entanglement.*

Photograph by A. W. [illegible]

*Beachy Head Lighthouse, as it appeared from the cliff 533 feet above during a sixty-miles-an-hour gale.*

*A speed boat and its wake seen from the top of a floating crane between Southampton and Cowes*

present lighthouse has a total height from base to vane of 137 feet, and the light is exhibited at a height of 103 feet above high water. It gives two white flashes every twenty seconds, and its intensity is approximately 275 000 candle-power.

The angle of vision at which this photograph was taken makes it a little difficult for the spectator to realize the tremendously heavy sea then running. But the size of

*A MEAL IN THE AIR*

*New York steel workers enjoying their noon-day snack on a girder of a building eight hundred feet above Rockefeller Centre*

*Planet News Photo.*

the great roller, seen in the top right hand corner of the picture, may be estimated by comparison with the figures of the men on the lantern gallery, especially when we take into consideration the fact that the wave is about 200 feet from the base of the lighthouse and, of course considerably further off than this from the camera.

Another example of an unusual effect secured from an elevated viewpoint is the photograph of the wake of a speed-boat. This was obtained from the top of a floating crane travelling between Southampton and Cowes. But the top of a crane—even a giant crane—is a mere molehill in comparison with the dizzy heights attained by those who help to build the skyscrapers of New York.

Awesome indeed is the position of those builders of the city who are lightheartedly

*THE PENGUIN'S DINNER*

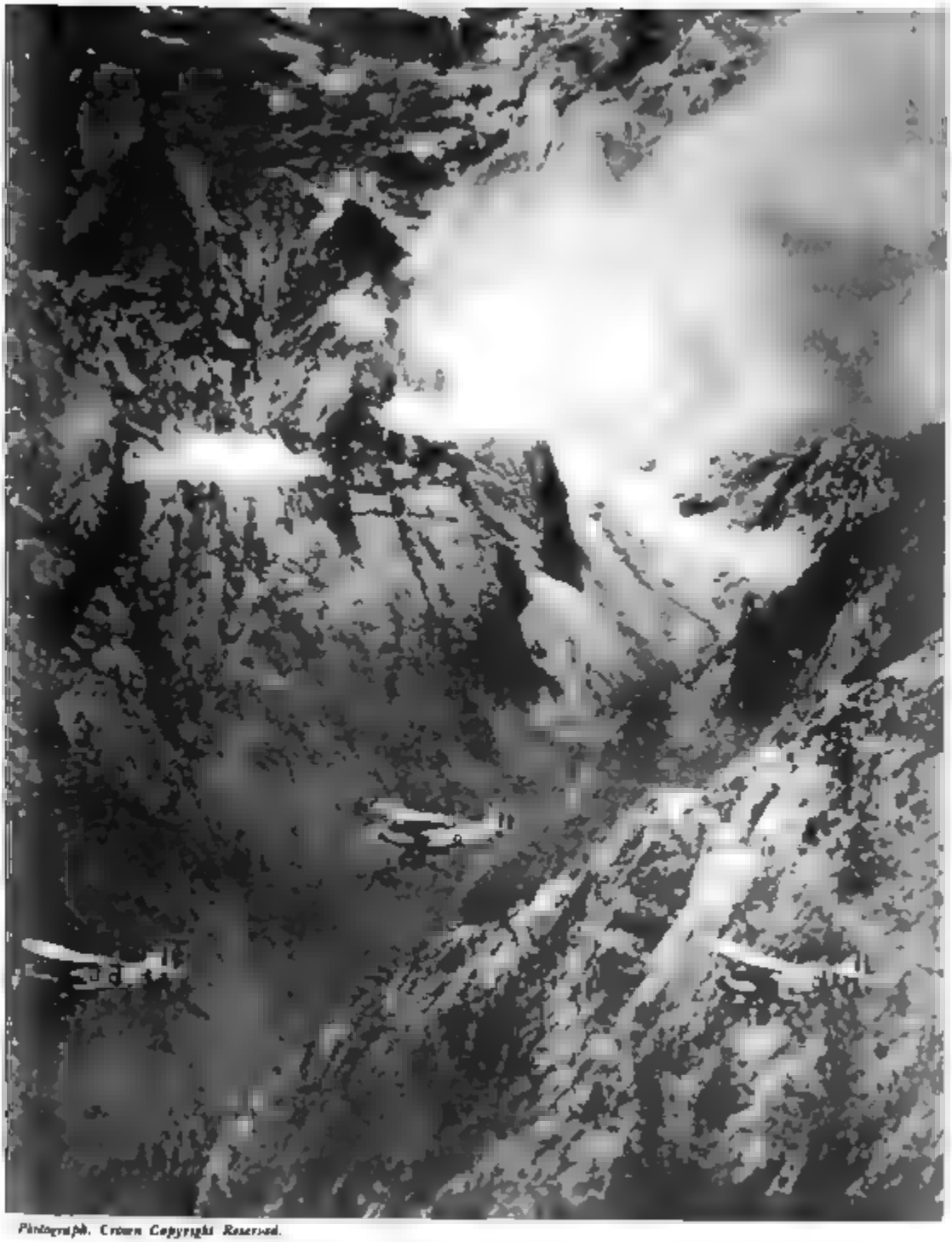
*A scene in the Berlin Zoo, showing a penguin swooping on a fish. A clever and artistic camera study by Hedda Walther*

[illegible] their arduous tasks [illegible] on a girder [illegible] a building 800 feet above Rockefeller Centre. To look at the striding and [illegible] faces of these steelworkers as they [illegible] one [illegible] gain of the [illegible] risks taken as a matter of course as part of the day's routine by so many of the workers [illegible]. With [illegible] their own [illegible] carelessness are [illegible] ness and sense of balance [illegible] save them from an appalling descent into the abyss below these men seem [illegible] conscious [illegible] they [illegible] any [illegible]

Habit does familiarly breed contempt of danger. This wonderful photograph reminds us of the well-known humorous drawing in which a house-breaker is shown hazardously standing with his pick on a pinnacle of masonry. Over him in the sky hovers an aeroplane, and as the workman looks up at it he exclaims, 'Blowed if I'd risk my neck in one of them things!' We see the danger in what others do but ignore it when we meet it in our daily rounds. Use or habit makes many men unconscious heroes.

In search of material for up-to-date picture-making the enterprising photographer of to-day goes up in the air, makes himself at home among the tops of the skyscrapers, or burrows underground to obtain new aspects of man and Nature. Nothing is too difficult for him to record, nothing too trivial to escape his notice. His vigilant eyes are alert to the activities of birds and animals as well as to those of men, and our knowledge of natural history and the secrets of animal life has been immensely increased by the enterprise and purposeful patience of expert photographers.

Penguins are very popular creatures with the children of to-day, and though they waddle slowly enough on land, they can move through water with surprising rapidity in search of food. The Berlin photographer Hedda Walther, in one of her visits to that city's Zoological Gardens, has skilfully recorded the swoop of a penguin at the very



*Photograph. Crown Copyright Reserved.*

*A FLIGHT IN THE HIMALAYAS*

*Three R.A.F. machines following the line of the Hunza River to fly over Mount Rakaposhi (25,550 feet).*

*PAINTING THE MENAI BRIDGE.*

*An unfamiliar aspect of the famous bridge which spans the Anglesey Straits, showing a painter at work while suspended in mid air.*

moment it has caught the fish. The delicate notation of light and shadow makes this a very charming as well as skilful example of pictorial photography.

Of very special interest both as a specimen of aerial photography and as a record of high achievement in flying, is a Royal Air Force photograph of a flight in the Himalayas. This picture was taken last November and shows a group of R.A.F. machines over Rakhot during the flight over the Hunza Valley and Mount Rakaposhi, which is 25,550 feet high. This demonstration flight over hitherto inaccessible country was accomplished by five day-bombers of the R.A.F. under the command of Flight-Lieutenant F. H. Isaacs, D.F.C., of No. 2 (India) Wing. The machines were Harts, with Kestrel engines, and the airmen were fitted with oxygen equipment. Having reached Gilgit, Kashmir, by way of the Indus valley and Chilas, the aeroplanes took off again and following the line of the Hunza River, flew over Mount Rakaposhi. Thus was accomplished another step towards the conquest of Mount Everest which, some hundreds of miles east of Rakaposhi, reaches a height of 29,140 feet above sea-level.

The perilous nature of the feat achieved by these gallant airmen can be gathered from this remarkable photograph, especially when we remember that much of the territory over which they flew offers a safe landing place. Beside the titanic rocks and snowy heights of these majestic mountains even the largest aeroplanes appear no more than puny insects.

[illegible] by the spectacular and sensational doings of pioneer airmen and [illegible] we should have photographic records of what they have done by their skill, their fortitude and their endurance. But wondrous as are the achievements of contemporary aviators, to the philosophic eye things only slightly less wonderful, and slightly less hazardous are performed by humble workmen at the course of their daily toil.

We have already seen how lightly the steel workers of New York take their perilous elevation on the girders of skyscrapers in course of making. But it is not only in the United States that workers learn to accept a new thing as [illegible] part and parcel of their ordinary work. Ironwork [illegible] for the protection of the metal and embellishing its appearance, but also for the preservation of the metal and our concluding photograph shows a British workman slung in mid-air while painting the famous Menai Bridge which spans the Anglesey Straits. Many have passed over the Menai Bridge but few can have seen it at this particular angle. Here again the [illegible] the greater part of the charm of the high romance which lies latent in an [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] engineering.

FOR centuries man has gone about the world with his nose on the ground and contented himself, in the main, with looking at things horizontally. The increase of aviation is destined not only to revolutionize transport but also to revolutionize our ways of seeing. Gradually we are, all of us, becoming not only air-minded but, so to speak, air-eyed. We are more conscious than ever before that we live in a world of three dimensions. We are getting used to the idea of seeing things from a high angle, and looking at objects not only horizontally but diagonally and even vertically.

Without recourse to an aeroplane, the camera-artist as we see in these photographs, can obtain some new aspect of familiar objects by climbing to a height from which to survey them. Hence Mr. Kerr's photograph of Beachy Head Lighthouse, the picture of the diagonal line made by a speed-boat's wake as seen from aloft and the curious perspective of Menai Bridge.

New points of view reveal new patterns in the works of Nature and of man, thus increasing and diversifying the material available for picture-making. So far, it must be confessed, the artist-painters—as the French say—have shown far less enterprise in making pictorial use of new points of view than the photographers, whom they are apt to look upon as only poor relations.' But the men with the camera possibly with a finer journalistic sense, have been quick to get about the world and extend the pleasures of observation.

*Let observation with extensive view,*
*Survey mankind from China to Peru,*
*Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,*
*And watch the busy scenes of crowded life"*

Photographers have evidently taken Dr. Johnson's precepts to heart. All over the world they have not only watched but recorded in their own way the busy scenes of crowded life, while it is their acute remarking of new aspects of 'anxious toil' which have resulted in some of the remarkable photographs which illustrate this article.

# SPRING!

THERE are, of course stage-door-keepers and stage-doorkeepers, just as there are stage-doors and stage-doors. And in case that doesn't make sense to you (and on looking at it again we find ourselves rather wondering why it should) what we're really trying to say is this

That at some London theatres the artists entrance is so blatantly obvious that patrons frequently mistake it for the way into the Upper Circle or Pit, while at others it is concealed with such loving care that even persons with actual appointments are unable to find it That in some cases the lair or cubicle containing the guardian is just where having discovered the entrance,

*Just a moment," interrupted Sir Julius, opening his ... "What experience ... has had?"*

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# DENIS MACKAIL

you would expect it while in theirs it is round a corner and half way down a break-neck flight of [illegible] by night nor even [illegible] speaking seems more like a great noise in the catacombs than anything else that we can at the moment call to mind

And that while in some theatres this guardian of janitor is young, brisk, rubicund, and wears [illegible] species of uniform in others he is elderly, or even aged, slow and sluggish, exhibits a complexion of unearthly

# Spring!

pallor and is clothed not so much even in a suit as in an aggregation of ancient and irreconcilable garments which have nothing in common save their remarkable frowstiness.

It is in this latter class that one definitely places Mr Brumfitt the doorkeeper who inhabited a minute, subterranean cave at the old Atrium Theatre, and had received the characters who came pitching down those worn and precipitous steps for more years, certainly, than there are days in the month. For just how many more we are unable to inform you, and though, of course, if it mattered we could ask Mr Brumfitt himself, it's a fact that he's never been one of those talkative and reminiscent doorkeepers to whom we should feel at all easy at putting a question like that.

No, Mr Brumfitt's efficient, there's no doubt, though laconic, he's also reasonably courteous to anyone with the least business on those steps, but he isn't, he never has been, the kind of doorkeeper with whom one would dream of dropping in for a chat. A dried-up, parchment-faced creature in steel spectacles, who arrives even before the cleaners and leaves after everybody else except the night watchman, the constant denizen of a playhouse who yet hasn't been a play since towards the end of last century, this Brumfitt passes through the backstage history of the Atrium as mute, very nearly, as the masks over the main entrance.

"Good morning," he says. "Good night," he says. "Mind the slope inside." But that's about all he says, in his old grey trousers, his old blue waistcoat and his old crumpled, pepper-and-salt jacket. The only change, in fact, that has ever been remarked in this Brumfitt—and few people have observed even this much—is that in the autumn and winter the bowler hat, which for some technical or professional reason never leaves his head, is a rusty black while during the remaining seasons it's replaced with a duplicate of an equally rusty brown.

They're both so much alike, however, and the cave where he lurks is so inadequately lit that, as we say, scarcely anyone is aware of even this trifling tribute to what goes on outside. And that's enough about Brumfitt, for the moment, for there's another subject to be discussed.

SPRING. The prime of the year. The promise of fulfilment. The pledge of immortality. Spring—when Persephone returns from Pluto's arms, when birds sing and buds burst, when the sap rises and the roads are tarred, when etherealmildness settles—occasionally—on Nature's face, when lambs leap and policemen go into shorter tunics, when primrose and bluebell fill the woods, when lamp-posts and pillar-boxes are repainted, when chickens and onions take on a fresh tenderness, when cuckoos and rate-collectors call, when a young man's fancy does just what Lord Tennyson said and (if you ask us) a young woman's ditto isn't so dashed torpid, either. When there are blossoms in the orchards and new models in the hat-shops. When nests are full of fledglings, and calves gambol, and your old overcoat suddenly looks so shabby and—— Well to put the whole thing in one word again (because if you haven't got what we're driving at by this time, you never will): Spring.

But of course you do get what we're driving at, because of course, and whatever your age, you're absolutely bound to notice it when it comes. Yesterday, perhaps, the wind was cold and the outlook was dark, there were arrears of work on your desk and duns at your door. But to-day—whoops and tra-la-la—what is this extraordinary feeling that has come over us all, what is this softness in the air, this almost unbearable sense of excitement that catches us by the throat, this fragrance which reaches us even in the heart of the city, this strange desire to laugh, run, chuckle, spend money and generally speaking make fools of ourselves?

What is this deep, astonishing and at the same time frivolous emotion that grabs us and fills us with wild thoughts and rash impulses—and then is gone, though summer burns and autumn blusters and winter braces, until exactly the same thing comes round again next year?

It's spring, that's what it is. Hey ding a ding, ding, as Shakespeare so succinctly put it. And talking of Shakespeare brings us back to the theatre, and the theatre reminds us of the Atrium, and the Atrium—naturally enough—conjures up the thought of that distinguished and successful star, Sir Julius Molesey, who in turn reminds us of Giles Ashburn (a playwright) and of Clare Cardew (an actress). And this is where we get going at last.

For Sir Julius's last vehicle having exhausted its public, the notice had gone up, and the curtain had come down. And in this situation while with one voice he announced the immediate presentation of its successor, with another he was calling on all his gods and yes-men to find him a Play—because a Play he must have, and without a Play he was sunk, and what was the use of all this tosh that the agents had sent him, and why the dickens had all the old authors retired, and why the dickens didn't any of the young authors know how to write, and how the dickens was he to

pay the rent when his theatre was dark and he couldn't find a Play?

And the gods did little or nothing, and the yes-men all went scurrying about but didn't really do so very much either. And Sir Julius read typescripts in bed, and at meals, and in his private office, and even in his bath, and groaned and threw them away and called for more typescripts and treated them in precisely the same manner. Until one day he came on the comedy which Giles Ashburn had sent him six months ago, and had been trying to get back for the last five. And he read it, and clapped his hand to his brow and was convinced that he'd made the most tremendous discovery—though it subsequently appeared that [illegible] at the same moment.

And he rushed to the telephone and asked Giles to lunch, and flattered him and buttered him up, and almost persuaded him that the delay had been inevitable, and fully persuaded him to take lower terms than he could now easily have obtained elsewhere—because, my dear boy, after all my Theatre has a Name. And a contract appeared as if by magic and was signed over the Napoleon brandy and cigars.

And Giles went away with distinct symptoms of dyspepsia, a clear conviction that he'd been swindled, but on the whole considerable relief at having the play taken and for instant production at last. And Sir Julius rubbed his hands together, and grinned at himself in the mirror over the mantelpiece, and was filled with intense satisfaction at having landed—so far as flair and experience could possibly determine beforehand—another absolute Sure Bet Knock-out, Riot, or Winner.

And it was now about half-way through a rather bleak and angry April.

So then the casting began in the usual frantic hurry, and it was quite obvious that So-and-so would play this part and that What's-her-name would play that, and that other mummers who were bound to the management by existing agreements could or would be fitted or rammed into all but one of the remaining *rôles*.

BUT when it came to the small but important part of the second *ingénue*, or heroine's friend, the matter suddenly became far less easy. For here So-and-so wanted too much money, and What's-her-name was too old, and Who'd you-call-it expected more lines, and That other girl had signed up to go to South Africa.

So that now, though they'd started rehearsing down on the dim, dusty stage, this second *ingénue* was still represented by a prompter of the opposite sex, which hardly conveyed the same effect. And Brumfitt, the doorkeeper, was still admitting shoals of beautiful applicants ('Straight through, Miss. Mind the slope, made') to be interviewed and tested by Sir Julius and young Giles Ashburn.

And these beauties smirked and fluttered their eyelashes, and wriggled their shoulders, and assumed strange and improbable accents as they read out little snatches of dialogue with an almost complete absence of intelligence. And Giles began to wonder whether his own words possessed any meaning at all. And Sir Julius looked very fatherly and said, 'Thank you, my dear. That'll do. I'll let you know,' and said something a good deal more violent as soon as they'd gone, and didn't let them know, because they knew well enough already, and went back to the rehearsal until word came that a fresh batch had arrived.

'Hopeless,' was one of the mildest adjectives that Sir Julius used on these occasions, and frequently he added some remarks on something-or-other amateurs with Oxford Street voices, that might have done those beauties a power of good if they'd heard them.

And Mr Heatherson's Broadstairs, who'd played here for years, continued to make light-hearted love to the prompter because there was still no one else to read the second *ingénue*'s lines. And Sir Julius continued to sift, to reject, and to comment on the decay of his profession. And Giles Ashburn continued to shudder every time he heard the prompter mangling his sentiment. And it was at this point that an extremely pretty girl called Clare Cardew found her way with some difficulty to the Atrium stage-door, and just saved herself from taking a header down those appalling steps, and in this manner introduced herself a little breathlessly to Brumfitt.

'Appointment, miss?' he asked, and if she'd been Venus herself this was all that Brumfitt would have said.

'Well, no,' said the girl, still trembling slightly. 'Not exactly. I mean. But they told me—I mean, I heard there was a part going. I mean, if it's not too late.'

'Straight through,' said Brumfitt. 'Mind the slope,' he added, as she shot through the swing-door. But for once the warning came far too late. The girl found herself running involuntarily, found it impossible to stop, found that she was going faster every second, saw a figure emerge suddenly round a corner, uttered a faint cry, flung her arms round it, and she and Giles Ashburn both banged into the wall at the end in a complicated and unexpected embrace.

"I'M terribly sorry," she said freeing herself, diving for her little bag, and again all but dashing her head into that of the courteous and successful playwright. "Oh, thank you so much," she said, as he reached the bag first and returned it to her. "I do beg your pardon," she said. "I'm afraid I lost my balance."

"Don't mention it," said Giles, who was no Lothario, but most certainly wasn't blind. "Is there anything," he began, "that I can——"

"Oh, thank you so much," said the girl again. "I—I wondered if I could possibly see Sir Julius. You see, a girl I know told me there was a part going here. In this new play, I mean. And—and——"

But perhaps it would be a mistake, she thought, if she told the first stranger she met in this queer place—even if he had rather nice eyes and rather a nice mouth—that she'd never acted before, except in one or two back-drawing-rooms, and that she'd only come here to-day because she'd lost her job as a secretary, and this other girl had failed to get the part yesterday.

"Is it too late?" she asked once more. And Giles looked at her again, and not only saw that so far as her appearance went she was the second *ingénue* of his dreams, but had also and already noted that her voice was both fascinating and attractive. So that, instead of answering her more directly, he caught her by the wrist and began dragging her back to the room which he had just left, at the same time shouting: "Sir Julius! I say—Sir Julius! Sir Julius! I say, just a minute!"

And here they all were in Sir Julius's private bower, its walls covered with framed photographs and other Thespian trophies, and the elderly but youthful figure of its occupant swinging round from yet another studious glance at his own reflection, and at the moment appearing more than a little astonished.

"Eh?" said the great man, slightly recovering himself. "What's that?"

"This lady," said Giles, "I met her outside just now. And I thought—I beg your pardon," he added, breaking off suddenly and bowing deeply. "I'm afraid I didn't quite catch your name."

"Clare Cardew," said Clare Cardew.

"Clare Cardew," repeated Giles, a trifle longer, perhaps, but with every sound of approval. "Well," he said, pulling himself together, "I don't know what you think, Sir Julius, but it seems to me——"

And here he began making a number of urgent and confidential faces at the great man, who at first continued to exhibit astonishment, but on turning away from them was immediately struck by the precise notion which they had been intended to convey.

"That part?" he suggested.

"Of course," said Giles.

"Hrrm," said Sir Julius, who hadn't reached his present professional pinnacle by engaging unknown players at sight. "And—Well, my dear," he said, in a fatherly manner, and proceeded to describe the part in a few unintelligible and inaccurate words. "And—Now, my dear," he said, in a fatherly manner, and picked up and fluttered a copy of the script. "Just try this little speech over for us," said Sir Julius, in a fatherly manner, and he sat down, crossed his legs, placed the tips of his fingers together, and closed his eyes.

Miss Cardew looked at Giles Ashburn, and he nodded encouragingly. "I must say," she thought, "he's got an awfully nice chin." And she began reading, nervously but distinctly, clearly but with no noticeable trace of feeling. "I love you," she announced. "Don't ask me why—don't ask me when it started, don't ask me how I know. I think I must have loved you all the time, really, and yet——"

"Just a moment," interrupted Sir Julius, opening his eyes again. "What experience have you had?"

"Experience?" said the girl, looking a little puzzled and alarmed. "Oh," she said, "I see what you mean." She took a sharp breath, and came out with it. "None, I'm afraid," she added. "But——"

"None?" said Sir Julius, looking shocked and surprised. He stared accusingly at the author, who quailed for an instant, glanced at the girl, and suddenly found himself filled with both obstinacy and courage.

"But, Sir Julius," he said, "Miss Cardew's exactly the type I wanted. I mean her appearance—well, don't you see what I mean? And her voice——"

His own voice faded away as the great man again relapsed into a temporary trance. But the great man was thinking, and among other things he was thinking that if he didn't engage somebody soon, they'd be in for a postponement; that it was true enough about this girl's looks, that the part, after all, was a small part that a beginner would, of course, take any salary that he offered; that young Ashburn had shown himself pretty intelligent so far, that he himself was undoubtedly the best producer and director in the world, and could unquestionably teach a dog or even a parrot to act if he chose to.

And, above all, that he was sick and tired of interviewing alleged professionals who were obviously just as hopeless, and that if he took this girl at least old Heatherley and the others would have to learn their

*"Oh, darling!" she said. "I think I must have loved you all the time really, and, oh, Giles, I'm so terribly happy!"*

lines in her scenes instead of mumbling and procrastinating

So that once more the great man opened his eyes, and nodded, and snapped his fingers, and conjured up a slave, who in turn conjured up Mr Bottleby the Business Manager—and a contract was produced, and the girl signed it, and it appeared that she was to receive no less than four pounds a week—and then everyone except the slave and Mr Bottleby went down to a mysterious and draughty spot which appeared to be the stage. And the rehearsal of Giles Ashburn's new comedy was resumed

SEVERAL hours later, after a number of painstaking efforts which hadn't exactly satisfied herself, and certainly hadn't made any great impression on Sir Julius or the rest of the company, Miss Cardew again passed the old doorkeeper in his stuffy box. And partly because she attributed her good fortune to the manner in which he'd set her race down that slope—partly because she was now an actress in his theatre, and partly from the natural simplicity and gaiety of her nature, Miss Cardew flashed a smile at him which would have made almost any other member of his sex at least feel that the world was a brighter place

But Bramfitt was satiated with beauty—and what were smiles in this building where insane slaughter was as common as ordinary speech elsewhere? He nodded, for he knew now—having been apprised by Mr Bottleby's assistant—that the young lady had got the part and was henceforward to be admitted without question. But no warmer answering gleam came from his pallid countenance, and Miss Cardew felt a little chilled. And chilled in another sense, also, as she emerged from the door at the top into an icy whirlwind

Brrh! she said. Ape indeed!' she murmured. But four pounds a week meant a fire in her bedroom at the Club, and perhaps some warmer clothes as well. And it was pretty wonderful to think that only yesterday she'd been a girl without a job, and a girl almost without hope—and how now she'd be earning more than she'd ever earned in her life

But of course it was going to be a success. She'd known that as soon as she'd learnt that that kind young man was the author—and wasn't it rather thrilling to have met anyone as famous and celebrated as that—and in such a curious and interesting way, too?—and four pounds a week were more than sixteen pounds a month, and sixteen pounds a month——

Well,' thought Miss Cardew, plays *have* run for a year, haven't they? But she reflected, more sensibly, I suppose I oughtn't to think about that—at any rate till I've learnt my part

So she went back to the Club, and sat up over the little gas-fire in her bedroom, and she did learn her part. Which was a short part, as we've told you, so that she was word-perfect by half-past ten, and it was really quite unnecessary to get up again at seven in the morning to see if she remembered it

And after this she went off to the Atrium every day, and smiled at Bramfitt—who didn't exactly smile back at her—and passed cautiously down the slope, and penetrated to the stage, and said her words when she was told to say them, and crossed from right to left or otherwise exactly as she was instructed, and did everything, in fact, that she was bidden, and never once was late or impertinent or temperamental or quarrelsome or jealous or sulky or any of the other things which one or two of her colleagues have certainly been in their time

But on the other hand if you imagine that this charming and conscientious young woman was a heaven-born actress or one of those heroines who has but to trip on to the boards to pass straight into the star dressing-room, then we're sorry to have to tell you that you're quite wrong

Wait a moment!' Sir Julius would shout from the darkness of the stalls. Just take that again, Miss Cardew, and do *try* and put a little more life in it!

She took it again with so much life that he came rushing over to stop her

'No, no,' he would say. You're not mad in this scene. You're in love, that's all. Now watch me

And of course he did it perfectly, though he was sixty-two and had certainly never been an *ingénue* in his life. Now, then, he would add, and then the results of his tuition would be so appalling that he'd go off somewhere and groan by himself

Or perhaps Mr Broadstairs would take a hand, and explain how easy it was if only she'd *feel* the part. None of them disliked her, and they all wanted to help her—it would have been different, perhaps, if she'd shown more promise—but what could you do with a girl who was as pretty as a picture and as pleasant as they're made, but simply hadn't got it in her to act?

Nothing, it seemed. And Sir Julius took young Ashburn aside, and groaned again, and said that contract or no contract, he'd *have* to get someone else. And Giles, though this play was now everything to him and his critical sense was as acute as ever, was astonished to find himself begging for the girl to be given another chance.

She'll get it yet,' he said. I know

she will She's a bit nervous at present—well, naturally, in a theatre like this—but she's bound to make a big hit if only she does get it I'm sure of it Sir Julius," said Giles, doggedly and recklessly and untruthfully Honestly I am. Look here. said Giles let *me* talk to her

AND Sir Julius being momentarily mollified by that reference to his theatre —and, besides, do you suppose he wanted to pay anyone four pounds a week for nothing?—the generous Giles did talk to her Frequently as a matter of fact

Anywhere, in fact that he could get her alone and listen to her voice and gaze earnestly at her extraordinarily pretty face And always and honourably he began by explaining the part and suggesting methods of dealing with it. and invariably and inevitably he found, after a very short time, that they were both talking about almost anything else

About life About themselves. About his ideas for plays, and her ideas when she heard them So that presently it seemed to Mr Ashburn that it would really be better in a way and that they would be less subject to interruptions, if he took her out to lunch

'Oh but, really said Miss Cardew I mean —

Nonsense!" laughed Giles "Of course you're coming. Why on earth not?"

There was so obviously no answer to this question, that Miss Cardew came Together they threaded the labyrinth, climbed the slope. and passed out through the inner swing-door

Any letters for me, Brumfitt? asked Giles

The dingy doorkeeper looked over his spectacles at the rack, under them at the shelf beneath it, swept a collection of envelopes together, and handed them over

That's the lot, sir," he said. looking through his spectacles for a change

Thanks." said Giles And 'Come on then he said

What an awful life.' said Clare. as they reached the top of the steps Cooped up in that little den all day

Eh?" said Giles. "Brumfitt do you mean? Oh, well he's used to it

Never getting any fresh air," added the girl

Eh?" said Giles again Well who wants fresh air when it's as cold as all this? Besides, if you work in a theatre—

Either he left the sentence unfinished or else the rest of it was drowned in the noise of the traffic But it was obvious what he meant. and suddenly it seemed to his companion that stuffiness and dreariness were indeed inseparable from her new profession. Which surprised her because until this very moment she had assumed even if she hadn't truthfully felt, its glamour Which worried her because here she was committed to it indefinitely she supposed Which in turn made her look thoughtful as she entered the restaurant, and a little anxious as she took her seat

Hullo" said Giles, staring across the table. 'What's the matter? What's the trouble?

"Nothing,' she said

'Go on!" he said Tell me"

Of course he was awfully kind and sympathetic. but of course it would sound so terribly ungrateful if she explained She stared back at him—and, gosh, didn't she look lovely

Look here. said Giles, abruptly I believe I know what it is You're bothered about these rehearsals.'

Well, yes—in a way '

You'll be all right,' said Giles. Of course if you *could* let yourself go a bit more I mean I know it must be awfully difficult I couldn't act, if you paid me a million a week But I've got a hunch about you—somehow'

Have you? said the girl

Had he? He'd got something, certainly Well there must be something to explain how he went on encouraging her when he *knew* she was no good To explain how he was fighting to keep her in the part. when her present kind of performance was wrecking the whole *close* of the Second Act To account for his strange interest in her and his strange stubbornness. and his strange and determined efforts to ruin his own show What was it then? He just couldn't make it out

Look here,' he said suddenly Let's talk about something else

And they did, easily and cosily and presently they went back to the theatre, and nodded and in one case smiled. at Brumfitt and resumed the rest of the cast And the girl was, if possible worse than ever that afternoon. And no better the next day so that Giles and Sir Julius very nearly came to blows in the latter's sanctum and even Brumfitt though he remained quite unmoved heard the grunts and yells which came drifting out from the fray

But Giles won because the dress-rehearsal was now less than twenty four hours away and with the heavy advance-booking a postponement was unthinkable

I tell you he concluded, hoarsely and unjustifiably, 'I *know* she'll be all right on the night

And I tell you were the Star's last words. that only one thing can make that

happen. And that," said Sir Julius, forcefully, "is an unprintably-qualified miracle."

But it is a miracle, or so it still seems to us, when that sudden softness comes into the air, that heady, intoxicating sweetness, that lifting and lightening of the spirit, that intense, unreasoning but irresistible sense of excitement and exhilaration and joy. At the dress-rehearsal, during which Miss Cardew was so unutterably bad that Giles hid in the deserted bar and Sir Julius nearly strangled himself with suppressed emotion, it was also so cold that Mr Bottleby made all arrangements for fortifying tomorrow's queues with hot cocoa—so that they shouldn't perish before they could applaud.

But in the morning the miracle had happened, and it was so mild, so balmy, so magical under the blue sky and golden sun that not only were these arrangements hastily cancelled, but Giles, who had intended to give Miss Cardew lunch at the Serene Grill Room, called for her in his car and drove her far away into the country instead.

And there the birds sang, and the lambs skipped, and the fields and hedgerows glittered in the warm sunlight. And there, also, Giles Ashburn suddenly astounded himself, but at the same time experienced a bewildering sense of relief, by first of all kissing Miss Cardew with extreme violence—which isn't a bad way to start—and then addressing her in such a manner that in a very short time, and to her equal amazement, she was telling him that she loved him.

"Oh, Giles!" she said. "Oh darling—don't ask me why, or when it started, or how I know. But I think I must have loved you all the time, really, and, oh, Giles, I'm so terribly happy!"

So was Giles, even with a first night ahead of him. And he laughed when she told him how nervous she was. And he laughed still more when, of her own accord, she said she never wanted to act again. "But I can be useful to you," she said. "I've been a secretary, I mean, and I can take down all your ideas, and type everything you write, and——"

"As if I'd let you!" said Giles, though as a matter of fact this is exactly what she still does for him. And he kissed her again, and presently they drove back to London, and then, alas, they had to separate, and he didn't meet her again until he rushed round after the second act, with the applause ringing in his ears, to find Sir Julius—more fatherly now than any real father who has ever existed—literally dancing in front of his second *ingénue*, and telling her in an access of chronological abandon, that he hadn't seen such a performance for forty years.

IT was the spring, again, which had undoubtedly had its own effect on this tough old mummer in his toupée and his grease-paint. But, undoubtedly, it had also broken down that stiffness and resistance in Miss Cardew's simple soul, so that as she had spoken almost the very words which she had uttered on that green hillside this afternoon, she had thought of Giles, and had communicated her gaiety even to a first-night audience at the Atrium.

So that they had shouted, and banged their hands together, and thumped on the floor with their feet. And as they did exactly the same thing at the end of the last Act, it wouldn't and didn't matter. Miss Cardew slipped out of her small part a fortnight later, and retired for ever on her marriage. The impetus and enthusiasm remained, the public went on rolling up in their hundreds and thousands, and Mr Ashburn's new comedy—as Mrs. Ashburn had prophesied—ran for a year.

But before all this happened, and at about midnight after the conclusion of that triumphant *première*, Giles and Clare came up that slope together, arm-in-arm, and on their way to supper and heaven. And there in his box, was old Brumfitt, fusty and frowsty as ever. And suddenly it seems to have come over this girl not only that her happiness was almost choking her, not only that the mild air which she was breathing was now more intoxicating than ever, but that this dingy old man, to whom in her present mood she owed everything—had missed all the excitement and all the glory because, of course, he'd again been shut up in this stuffy little cave all day.

And——"Oh, Brumfitt!" she burst out, tugging at Giles's arm. "Oh, Brumfitt!" she exclaimed, passionately. "It does seem a shame to think of you here all the time. Oh, Brumfitt, I *am* sorry for you. Oh, Brumfitt, when everything's so marvellous and everything's so wonderful! Oh, Brumfitt!" she cried, compendiously, "The spring!"

She smiled again ravishingly, and for the first time since she had passed this den the old doorkeeper suddenly and astonishingly smiled back at her.

"Spring, miss?" he echoed, peering through his steel spectacles. "That's right, miss. Why, in course I noticed it—same as you did. Why, look, miss," said old Brumfitt, "I've put on me brown 'at.

# A DOG'S DAY

By

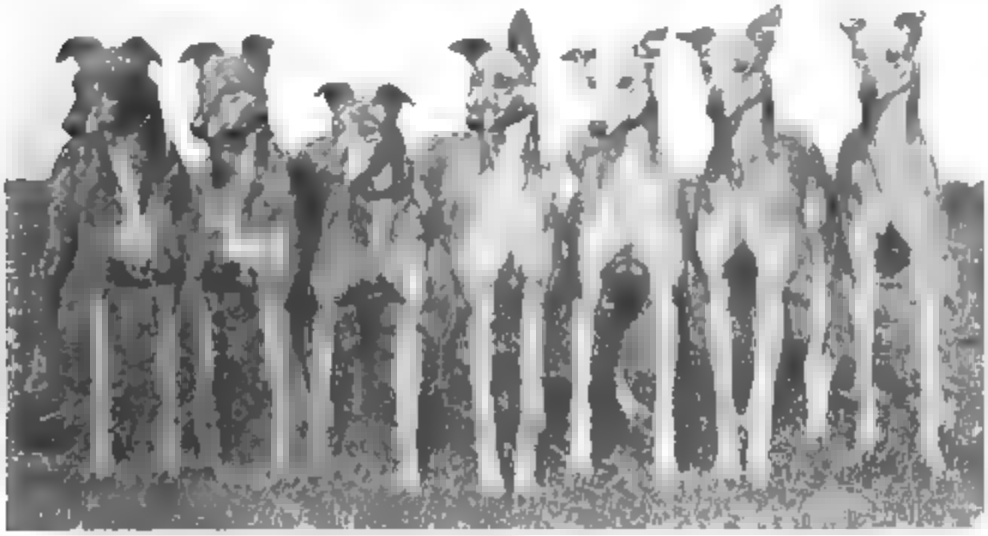
## CHARLES GRAVES

OVER a hundred million people have watched greyhound racing since the sport became a popular pastime six years ago, but it cannot be said that they have seen very much of the dogs. Just a fleeting glimpse of them, muzzled and in their coloured jackets, as they are paraded round the track, and a still more fleeting glimpse as they rush by in their half-minute dash to the winning post.

The daily life of a racing greyhound is very carefully ordered and it will surprise a good many people to learn that the spectators at the tracks see almost as much of the dogs as do their proud owners themselves. The owner has to hand his animal into the care of the trainer, who takes full charge. Thenceforward the dog's work and play, food, rest, and exercise are all matters for the trainer alone, so that the privilege shared by most other dogs—of being a household pet and a friend of the family—does not apply to racing greyhounds. They are, so to speak, in business. They have a good time, but they work for their living, and keep office hours. They have their play time, and enjoy it, but you don't see father throwing sticks into the Serpentine for them on a Saturday afternoon.

If you follow a greyhound through his average day, from getting up to bedtime, you will see that he lives strictly according to rule. In the winter they let him sleep till seven o'clock, in summer time they call him an hour earlier. His dwelling-house is a bright and roomy kennel about nine feet by seven, which he shares with a comrade.

While his house is cleaned and aired, and the straw changed, he enjoys a scamper in the paddock. Then he is ready for



# A Dog's Day

*Wild Woolley, winner of last year's Greyhound Derby, takes a last look at town from the window of his train home*

breakfast—rusks and warm milk—and his appointed work for the day begins. For easier narration of his activities, let us call him Johnny Swiftfoes.

The work varies, depending on whether he is due to race within the next forty-eight hours. If not racing in the immediate future, one of his menservants takes Johnny for a four-mile walk, and treats him to a thorough massage on his return with long sweeps over the loins and quarters for ten minutes. Johnny is very fond of this item in the day's programme.

The next thing for him to look forward to is dinner. It is probable that he would like to protest against the delay in its arrival, for dinner isn't served till four o'clock.

But it is worth waiting for. Johnny gets nothing but the best. You take the best beef together with a lot of vegetables (onions, carrots, and cabbage) and cook in a large copper. No potatoes are allowed. Doctors are always telling us humans that potatoes are fattening, and Johnny has got to think—all his racing life Johnny has got to think—about that schoolgirl figure without which he wouldn't be any good.

In course of time the cook decides that this preparation has become a worthy stew, and he pours it over rusks, which are left to soak for an hour or two. Johnny Swiftfoes and his school companions are then served with dinner. They eat huge amounts of it and get laughably blown out in the process, forgetting for the moment all about that slim figure which they always present to the gaze of the public.

But this is a non-racing day. Johnny Swiftfoes returns to his kennel for a snooze, is let out once again in the paddock between five and six, and is packed off to bed at eight. His last thought is, or ought to be, that Mr Trainer has looked after his comforts very well this day.

On the days when Johnny is to appear in public and hurtle after the electric hare things are naturally different; his only work on race days is a slow half-mile walk round the fields.

Not for him, this afternoon, the gorgeous full-dress dinner which I have described. He has to be content with a skeleton meal at two p.m., a mere snack of a lunch—just a little gravy and a couple of raw eggs, with a walk round the fields to follow.

He is then given a rub down, and driven to the racing stadium in a specially constructed van which holds eighteen dogs. After a walk round the paddock attached to the track, the dogs are then brought in and weighed.

This business of weighing is necessary and

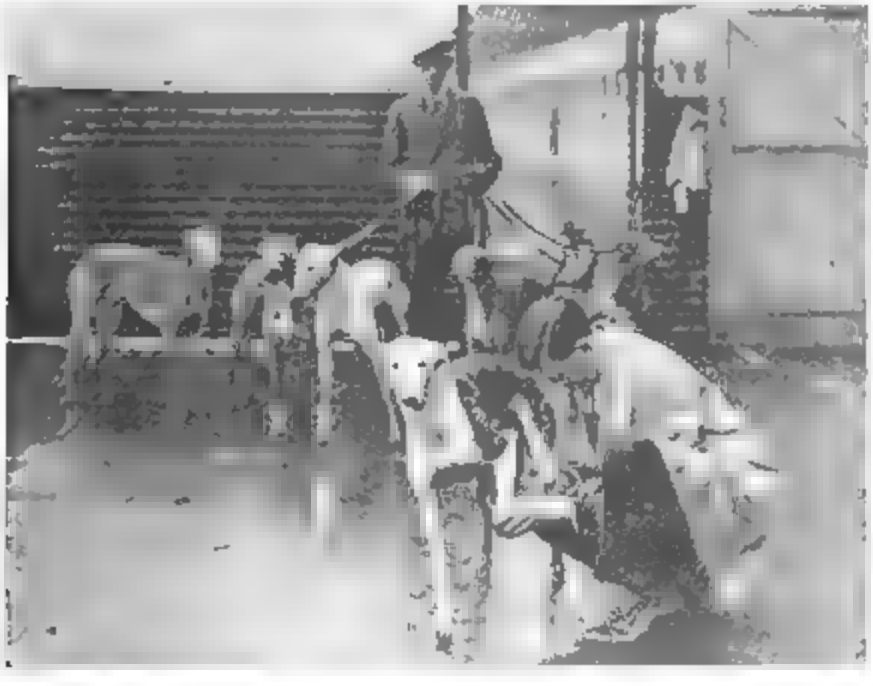
important to the sport of greyhound racing, and is never omitted. It is in the interests of the huge public that supports the pastime, because a change in a dog's weight invariably means a change of form. If there is a difference of more than two pounds from the weight recorded at its previous appearance, a dog is not allowed to race.

Expert knowledge on this point is interesting. Alfred Sammons, the kennel manager at Wimbledon, told me that greyhounds can lose or put on weight more quickly than any other animal. The normal variation in a greyhound's weight is half a pound, but if he is fretting he can lose three pounds in a few hours, and within twenty-four hours can look like a skeleton.

After being weighed, the eyes and pulse of each dog are carefully examined, and his temperature taken. He is then locked up in the kennels until twenty minutes before the first race. So thorough is the supervision exercised over the life and career of Johnny Swifttoes that he is then examined again, to make sure that he has done himself no injury in the kennel. And he is examined yet once more—for the third time—immediately before his race. Only then is he clad in his coloured racing jacket, and allowed to go forth on the track, to justify by victory or a well-run race all the care bestowed on him.

After the race Johnny Swifttoes is massaged by his trainer. Possibly, his owner may look him up, and will be allowed to give him a lump of steak. If so, the weight of the steak will be noted, and callously deducted from the dog's evening meal. Now Johnny's feet are washed with disinfectant, and a bowl of tea is given him. He is put into the van again, and driven home, where he has the big meal he would have had at 4 p.m., if he had not been racing. Another dog's day is ended—one of his busy working days.

The experts will tell you that the average dog ought to race at least once a week unless he has lost his form, when he should be given a rest. That applies to the ordinary



*A racing greyhound's feet require special care, and they are regularly inspected and treated at the training quarters.*

*The Veterinary Surgeon making his examination, and a steward checking the markings of a greyhound with the identity book before the start of a race*

performer in the graded races, but the real, good dog—the class animal—does not race more than once a fortnight. Until a dog is a year and a half old, he is not even called a greyhound, but a "sapling," and saplings are not allowed to race until they are fifteen month of age.

And when Johnny Swifttoes reaches the venerable age of six, his racing days are over.

To the ordinary dog-lover, who adores his own terrier and makes a family pet of him, the greyhound seems a dog set apart from all other dogs, a bit lacking in the 'doggy' qualities he himself loves. Indeed greyhounds are vastly "different" from other dogs, and their food preferences are only one example of this. Your terrier enjoys a dog biscuit, but the greyhound won't look at one. Your terrier takes delight in gnawing a bone, and most greyhounds would ignore a bone if you gave it to them. But they love eggs, above all things, and, happily, eggs are good for them.

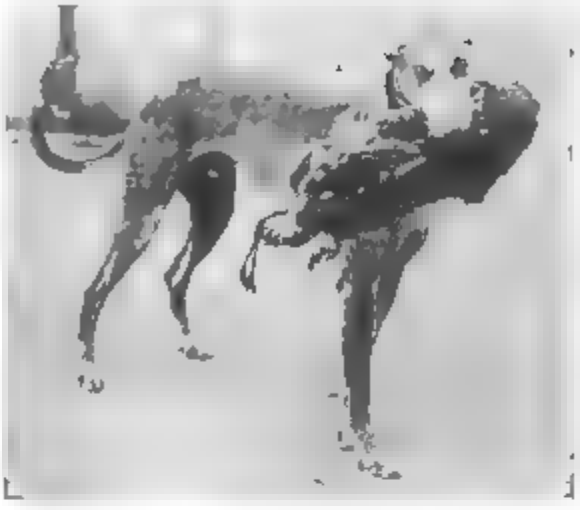
It is the same with drink. Other dogs revel in a bowl of water. The greyhound is never given water to drink, and he doesn't want it. He will not touch water, even on the hottest day. He likes cold tea, which is given him, after a race, as a stimulant.

Bearing in mind that all his energy and education are directed to the one purpose of racing, the differences in a greyhound's character and temperament are to be expected. Trainer Probert, who has charge of forty dogs at Wembley, finds that greyhounds are very delicate, and catch cold very easily. Unless they have the best possible food, they become off colour and are unable to race. That is why their board costs eighteen-and-six a week.

Trainer Probert told me of the peculiarities of that famous champion greyhound Future Cutlet, who won the greyhound Cesarewitch last year. When Future Cutlet arrived in this country from Ireland he was so finicky that his Irish trainer was compelled to stay here with him for a month before the dog became acclimatized. Future Cutlet has his own ideas on food, insisting on brown bread soaked with sheep's broth, and onions. If ill, he is fed with eggs and milk, and beef extract. He always sleeps with his head under the straw. Directly he is let out he makes straight for the place

where he caught a rat a year ago. He is still hoping.

'Most of my dogs have some mannerism or other,' said Trainer Probert as he took me round the kennels. "A dog called Sookholme Lad always sleeps with his four paws pointing to the roof, as though he were dead. This dog here is Glen Arab, and he used to sleep in the same way. Here is Mountain Loafer. He won't allow another dog in his kennel, and yet when he was down in the country I saw him playing with some terrier puppies who were climbing all over him and barking their heads off, and Mountain Loafer didn't seem to mind at all. Have a look at Walcutt: he's a queer fellow. When he finishes a race he always tries to jump over the hare-board into the enclosure and from there into one of the corridors. By doing that he hopes to catch the hare in the yard. He did catch the hare once: the only dog that ever has."



*Walcutt—the only dog that ever caught the electric hare proudly carrying his trophy which he refused to release until he was back in his kennel*

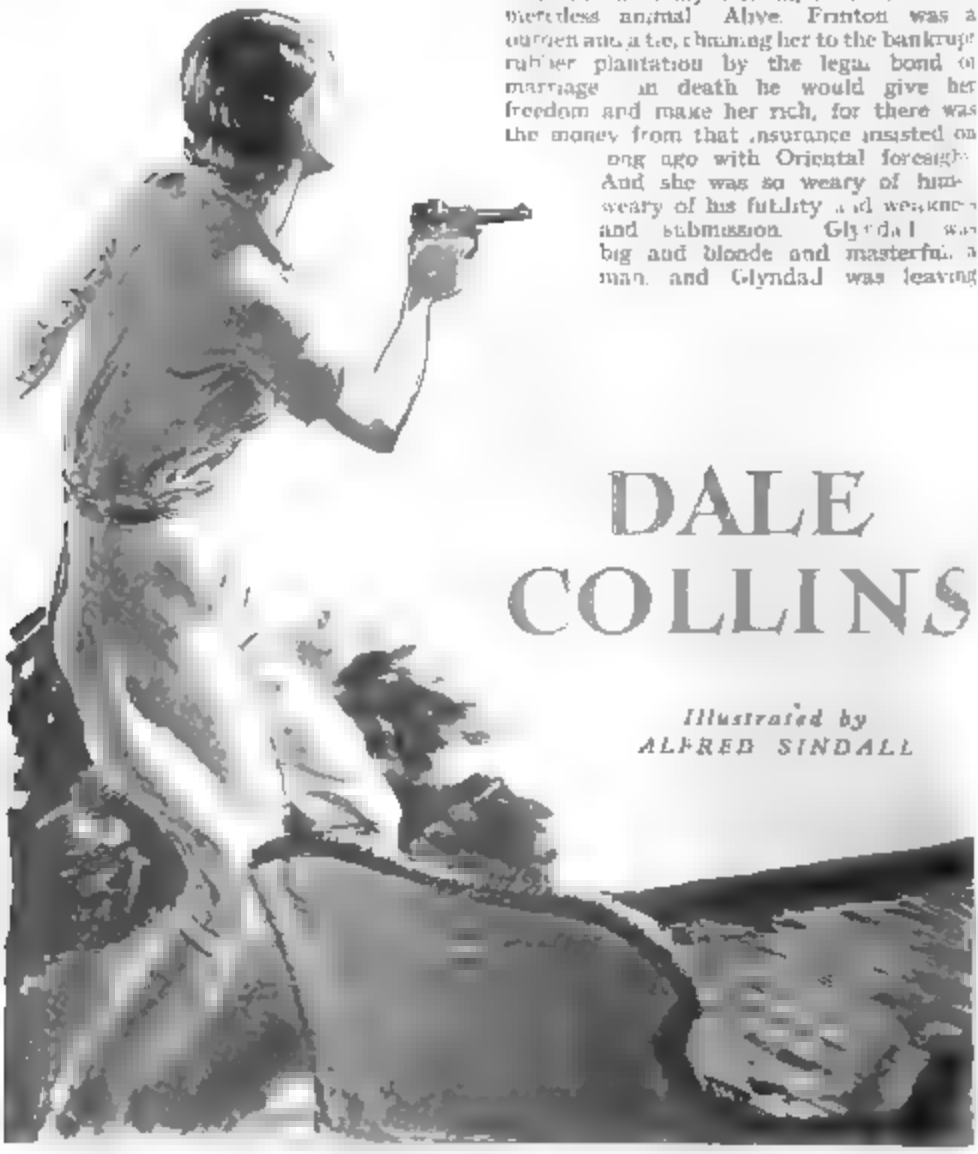
Trying to look at it from an ordinary dog's point of view, it must be a fine thing to be a racing greyhound and not as other dogs. At any rate there must be a lot in the life. There's the good living, that schoolgirl figure, all brushed and sleek, the thrill of the parade under the arc lamps, the dash after the hare, the applause for the winner—everything done for you except the racing. An important life, full of pride!

Most of our conventional ideas about dogs seem queerly lacking when we consider the racing greyhound. Somehow, it is difficult to imagine him as a household pet. He is not an ordinary tail-wagger. He doesn't care for biscuits, and he rejects bones. But in his way, he is something of an emperor. He is apart from all other dogs. Every dog has his day, but the greyhound has his glorious nights as well. He is not a "one-man dog," which is a high term of praise we give to our faithful and adoring Airedale or Sealyham or Cairn. He has a thousand friends every time he wins a race. And he is the dog many thousand people go nightly to see.

# LAUGH, IF YOU

DALE COLLINS

*Illustrated by*
ALFRED SINDALL



"I [illegible] if you like," said Matthew Frinton when he saw the dark eyes of his wife glittering behind the sights of the automatic pistol, "but I m glad this has come."

He meant it. She had made life a hell and the crisis opened the door at last. He was so tired, so disillusioned, so broken vain to go on fighting for her love, vain to go on loving.

"Yes," said Lina, "I'll laugh, and mine is the last laugh."

She also meant it. Her white teeth showed between her full red lips. She was a lovely animal, this daughter of a Dutchman and a Malay woman, and she was a merciless animal. Alive, Frinton was a barrier and a tie, chaining her to the bankrupt rubber plantation by the legal bond of marriage; in death he would give her freedom and make her rich, for there was the money from that insurance insisted on long ago with Oriental foresight. And she was so weary of him—weary of his futility and weakness and submission. Glyndal was big and blonde and masterful, a man, and Glyndal was leaving

# LIKE

might suspect what they liked they would [illegible] Sometimes [illegible] shielding [illegible] the [illegible] stroke and so simple and brazen wherein lay [illegible]

LINA had prepared for the road before she wakened her husband to meet his death She wore [illegible] shirt and a wide felt hat [illegible] Before she left the veranda without a backward glance Across the clearing she went to the shed where her horse was ready saddled What more natural than to ride to Glyndall for aid when she found her husband had shot himself?

No need to hesitate no need to think She had rehearsed it all so often though the time had not been ripe until that morning

As she cantered away through the mists and the grey light of the new day, her face was still and masked, like that of one asleep She often wore that expression It was the blood in her—the blood of an ancient and secretive race Glyndall having become a necessity she had swept aside anything that raised a barrier, and now she went to him

The horse settled down to a jog-trot the neglected aisles of the rubber trees, where the jungle was already intruding again were left behind, and Lina rode down a tunnel of green She sat a-dream, unconscious of her surroundings, lips parted a little, eyes gazing emptily ahead

With all the world before her Lina was in a happy trance From her mother she had inherited the capacity not to look back but always to live eagerly in the moment and the future The body back there remained in her consciousness only as an obstacle stepped over and left behind

The sun was high when they came up the white path to Glyndall's house Warned by the slip-klop of hooves, he awaited her at the head of the steps He looked golden and brave, a Norseman His eyes had blue sparkles like a diamond's, he held out big hands covered with fair down

She jumped down, flung the reins to a boy, and ran slightly up the steps to claim those hands

My dear he said in his slow certain fashion

Your dear indeed—now! she answered speaking the clipped words in an exciting whisper, Is he out?

Yes," said Glyndall, knowing she referred to the new owner of the property he is already gloating on his bargain

Good she said I have news for you—fine news. I am coming with you Carl Franton committed suicide this morning—shot himself dead

Impossible to judge from Glyndall's manner whether he believed her announcement Certainly he did not cry out or start in horror He merely gazed down into the dark pools of her eyes, and said

So? So?' on a note of grave and deep-rooted satisfaction

Then he drew her close and kissed her at leisure, taking his time, as if enjoying the luxury of the knowledge that they need never be in haste again He did not like haste Her fire was fanned because he did not burn He was undemonstrative and elemental and masculine His woman would never be anything but a toy to him He would not fuss and make mistakes as that other had. The very manner in which he had received her news delighted Lina Those who were dead did not matter to him either His mind, though a world apart, reached the same conclusions as hers Both were of the earth peasants of East and West

Sit said he pushing her with affectionate roughness towards a long chair We must talk But first you need a drink

He poured the drinks with a steady hand in no hurry She lay back one olive arm curled behind her glossy head, and devoured his cool placidity His hand was steady when he gave her her glass

You are beautiful he said

You are my love said Lina

He sat on the wicker extension of the chair touched his glass to hers and drank deeply Lina savoured the bite of the spirits on her palate before resuming evenly

He shot himself just before dawn. He is dead and I am free to go with you"

A fortunate chance said Glyndall his eyes diamond bright in the brown mask of his face So that even the boys did not see it?"

No one said Lina. I came straight to you

You did well

Suicide The pistol—his pistol—lies there by him I shall tell the authorities how it happened"

Glyndall said with a judicial air A bankrupt man, a ruined man What more natural? We shall go over there when my business is finished and, if the boys have not buried him already, we shall see to it Then we go straight to the coast and are done with this country It was considerate of Franton to shoot himself The most sensible thing he ever did We shall be happy in Java That is a grand place"

I shall be a rich girl," said Lina

Yes," said Glyndall comfortably it has all turned out very well"

The new owner of the estate returned from his inspection Trust Glyndall to find [illegible]

*The old witch-doctor, master of the ceremonies, rose stiffly from his place As sceptre he carried a human thigh-bone, and thus he pointed at the couple*

of oil on the property had served him well This callow, foxy youth was entitled to his shrewd speculation Glyndall beamed on him After all should he be disappointed about the oil the rubber trees remained and that was all he had any right to expect

The newcomer was shocked to hear about lovely Mrs Frinton's husband, and readily hastened the formalities of taking over so that they could get away as soon as possible to catch the schooner which had brought him and which awaited Glyndall on the coast

WHEN the business was done and the bearers had their loads, Glyndall and Luna shook him warmly by the hand and left him in utter privacy to seek out the oil Glyndall ahead as was fitting they rode away from the valueless estate, content and quiet, finding life good The bearers streamed behind them, a string of oily bodies and childish minds. The sun set the brief dusk died the moon rose The world became all ebony and silver Insects shrilled and fireflies jewelled the darkness Unseen creatures rustled away The stream was quicksilver slipping from the tall ranges down to the far warm sea

First they heard the drums

The boys mourn for him," said Glyndall over his shoulder They liked him well

Wailing voices mingled with the throb of the drums. Through the regular columns of the rubber trees they saw the fire, red and hot It lit the clearing and threw the house into relief like a piece of stage scenery with nothing behind it Reaching the open space they reined in and surveyed the scene. They might have been shadows for all the heed paid to them Monotonously, maddeningly the mourners chanted in praise of the dead man and cried Ai-ie! Ai-ie! that he had gone from them to return no more

Before the fire was the new-made grave the soil still moist Queer that they should have buried him, but Frinton had always let them take more on themselves than he should have. The heathens had placed a rude cross at the head of the grave acting, no doubt on the instructions of one who had been Mary Magdalen Mesuki prim in a Mother Hubbard down at the mission station—but at the moment naked save for some beads, joined in the ceremonial which had nothing to do with Methodism

Glyndall and Luna dismounted and leading their horses crossed to the wake

Attend me boomed Glyndall raising his whip commandingly and bulking huge in the firelight. He spoke in the dialect, and his great voice crushed the chants, checked the swaying bodies and caused all the brown eyes to turn to him

"It is well you mourn the master said Glyndall He killed himself with the gun. He was sad and weary He wished to be done with all this, and so he killed himself" A steely ring in his tones dared them to deny it There is no more work here because the master has shot himself Is it understood? Say all of you

In a moan they answered obediently

Yes! Ai-ie, yes!"

The Government man will come and if he speaks to any of you you will tell him this truth"

Yes, they promised dull and docile as cattle

The sinabada goes with me to tell the Government man

To that they said nothing, and Luna scowled

The old witch-doctor master of the ceremonies rose stiffly from his place opposite the cross. He was a skeleton held together by parchment skin his eyes were red, his body was rudely daubed in clay patterns befitting his office, and on his head were the feathers of black cockatoos built up in funereal plumes As sceptre he carried a human thigh bone and this he pointed at the couple

She goes with you," he wheezed And the master also."

Luna and Glyndall were not impressed They smiled a little, patronizingly

Why should he worry us?" asked Glyndall. Are we to blame if he kills himself?"

He is restless," said the ancient man He goes with you I know not why There is no more He sat down again in the dust

And there is to be no more of this said Glyndall curtly. We sleep here to-night Away with all of you and no more noise

Submissively they rose and shuffled off Glyndall struck the witch-doctor across the shoulders with his whip to hasten his going The man of power did not betray that he had felt the blow He followed the others into the darkness and was dissolved The fire fell in and sent a shower of sparks dancing into the moonlight

Do they think I killed him?" Luna inquired boldly, tossing her head

What matter? They have nothing to gain by lies They will forget him He tapped the grave with his toe. This is well In two days he will be a handful of picked bones. Who shall trouble with them here in the heart of New Guinea

It is all over," said Luna, closing those pages for ever

They went up to the veranda. Frinton's blood was a dark stain on the boards. That did not trouble them. Why look back? He had gone away, and in the morning they would take anything of worth and go away also. Let the natives pillage the rubbish, let the jungle sweep in and tear down and consume and efface.

Once, in the pit of night, Lina awoke hearing a voice say, "Murder!" The voice was the voice of that other, so she knew she dreamt, and slept again.

Once, just before dawn, the voice spoke so loudly that same word that they both sat up. There was nothing, of course. One or the other had cried the meaningless word in a dream, waking both.

In the morning the houseboys served breakfast on the veranda as if nothing had happened. Out in the clearing the earth of the grave was already dried and old. The natives, having done what was fitting, had forgotten it. Lina did not give the grave a glance, for it was buried in yesterday.

Glyndall strode about. The short-memoried boys accepted him as master. There was little enough worth carrying from the bankrupt home. Such as it was, Lina and Glyndall took it. Before the heat of the day they rode away at the head of their bearers, and the abandoned plantation began its swift slip back into the primeval, for who would trouble to cultivate unsaleable rubber in the heart of the wilderness?

Lina and Glyndall rode by narrow winding paths between walls of jungle. The heat and the flies plagued them, but they did not mind. Soon the dark island would be less than a memory. Or so they thought until the strange thing happened without any warning in the full light of afternoon.

The voice of Frinton, who was dead, spoke loud, though muffled by mould. "Murder," said Frinton's voice. "And murder, without!" Murder!"

It came from somewhere in the green sea, from nowhere. They jerked the quivering horses back on their haunches, and sat frozen, eyes questioning each other in wild surmise. The bearers were jumbled in a tight knot.

"His voice!" In that green place the colour of Lina's face was ghastly, no longer old ivory.

All Glyndall's calm had been shattered. He shivered as if in a fever.

"Murder! Murder! Murder!"

Each repetition of the word was cruel as the stab of a blade. The walls of green were still and blank. No other sound save those myriad sounds of the bush that knit a silence. The horses sweated.

Faint and far, the throb of a drum came in pursuit.

Glyndall gave a grunt that expressed both relief and disquiet. "The witch-doctor," he remembered.

Lina's eyes grew round, she moistened her lips that were so seldom dry. "But darling——" The protest went unfinished because she did not believe it herself.

"They can do strange things."

Lina nodded unhappy agreement. The daughter of a Malay woman knew that. A cold moisture broke out on her.

"Quick! Let us get away."

"That is best."

Glyndall dug his heels into his horse and they fled the haunted spot as fast as the rough and narrow way allowed. Neither spoke of what had passed. Lina's blood came to her aid for while it made her admit the power of magicians, it also set a limit to that power, a childish limit, the limit of mere distance. Spells could only carry so far. With every yard they drew nearer to the edge of the witch-doctor's sway. It would not happen again, could not happen again.

But her ears still strained to hear at any second the voice of the dead speak the word.

Spent and silent, they came at evening to the village of Barada, glancing back over their shoulders like people pursued, to find nothing there save the jungle green and the woven net of jungle silence. Warned, as usual, by the drums, the brown people expected them. A hut had been prepared. It stood on one bank of the stream with the village a crescent on the other. So friendly and hospitable the inhabitants, so normal everything, that the fantastic event might have been forgotten had not the senses insisted on listening.

That evening when the moon rose, the lovers sat on a boulder by the stream which chuckled coolly on its way to the sea. Another of the endless ceremonies was in progress on the further bank. Glyndall swore he'd put a stop to it when they were ready for bed. Meanwhile the drums tapped and the reedy voices waned and the bodies swayed. A witch-doctor who might have been twin brother to the one in the clearing, moved ritualistically before a fire. The herbs he scattered gave off clouds of aromatic smoke that drifted to the pair. Frogs croaked and the birds of the night cried harshly.

Drums and voices swept up louder, faster, they snapped off into a tingling silence.

"Ah!" gasped Lina.

She sat bolt upright in Glyndall's arm which tightened convulsively about her. Still, stiff, they stared across the silver stream, across the beaten disc of earth

*In the mist [illegible] from the holy fire a ghost took shape. It raised a deliberate arm and pointed at the couple. "Murder! Murder without!" it said*

before the hats, to the smoke that rose from the holy fire. In it a ghost took shape, white, shimmering, and luminous against the background of the jungle. Eyes not unless brown people gaze.

Matthew Fenton, west in the scented smoke.

He raised a deliberate arm and pointed at the couple. "Murder! Murder without! Murder [illegible] through the soul of him, just as if it had been a

For an uncalculated space he continued with a cold ruthless stare accusatory finger thrust out. No mistaking his [illegible]

dad Fenton been there in the flesh they could not have seen him clearer.

"Murder!

He dropped his hand, receded, faded, vanished. They were staring at an ordinary fire from which rose white and empty smoke. The brown people showed no surprise. The drums began to beat again, and the sorcerer rested after his labours.

Those peasants of East and West clung together, no longer sure and ruthless but frightened as lost children. There was nothing they could say, nothing they could do. The witch-doctor had sent a ghost on

their trail, and what remedy could there be? They rose and stole away to the hut. A lantern was already inside, but Glyndall called for another. Still dressed, they crept under the mosquito nets and flung themselves on the camp beds, clammily cold though the hut was an oven.

They lay and listened.

The singing and the drums trailed off, and there was nothing to hear save the noises of the night. Yet when at last they fell into uneasy sleep it was only to be jarred back into wakefulness by Frinton's voice repeating his message.

Scared even into defying the supernatural, Glyndall fought his way from the hut of the mosquito net, fumbled for his revolver, and, heedless of Lina's frightened warning, raced out. Met by a patch of misty whiteness on the ground, he fired at it. The bullets buried themselves in the heart of a fire.

Nothing else save the stars and the dark trees. Ordering the startled boys to stand guard, he shuffled back again, nestled.

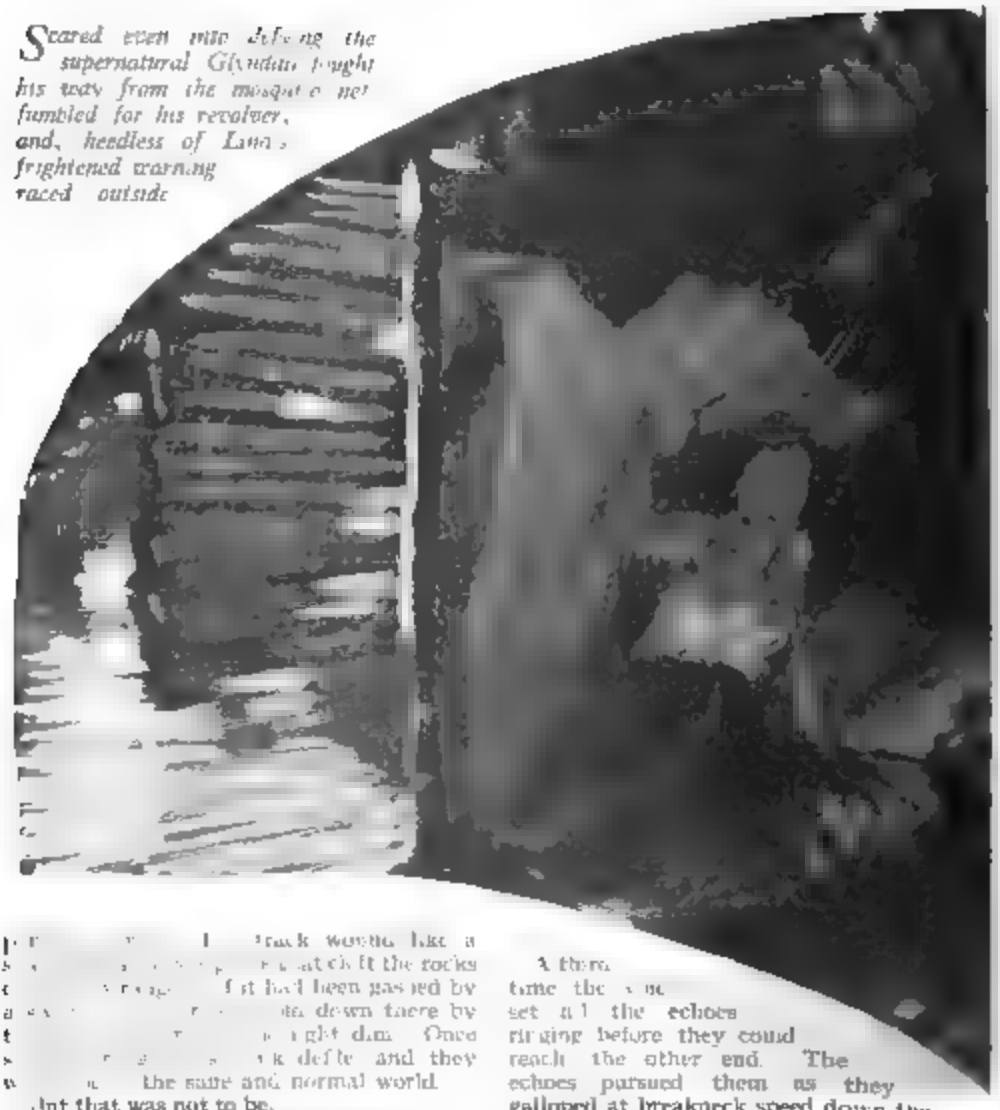
At first streak of light we must get away.

Oh, yes, yes, yes, sobbed Lina.

They listened. The night was ghostly, but the voice did not speak again.

While yet the pale stars hung in the sky they were off on what was becoming a panic-flight. As they went they listened. Nothing save the happy chatter of the awakening birds and insects, the plop of dew falling from the leaves, the occasional burble of the stream. But they were not to know when the next moment would be possessed by the voice.

Hour on hour passed, mile on mile. The smell of the sea, the smell of freedom, seemed to be in the air now. They hastened faster, leaving the boys behind urging the



*Scared even into defying the supernatural Glyndall fought his way from the mosquito net fumbled for his revolver, and, heedless of Luna's frightened warning raced outside*

[illegible] struck wonderfully like a [illegible] at each of the rocks [illegible] that had been passed by [illegible] down there by [illegible] night-dim. Once [illegible] defile and they would [illegible] the safe and normal world.

But that was not to be.

"Murder!" came the implacable voice of Brinton, louder than ever. "Murder will out! Murder!"

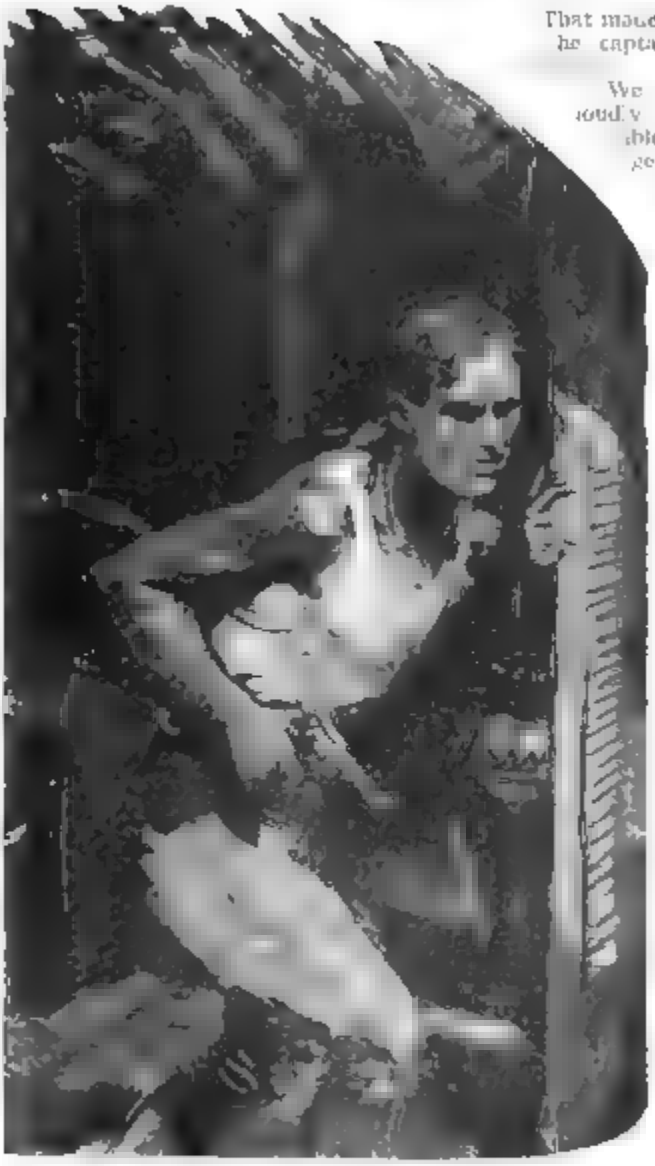
The echoes took up that challenge, mutilating and twisting it, flinging it from rocky wall to rocky wall, damning it in their ears, until they, too, had to cry out and the horses plunged and neighed.

Again Brinton shouted, and again the echoes did their work, keeping the words alive until they were mere ghosts of a ghost's words.

Now Luna and Glyndall rode for their very lives, flaying the terrified animals with [illegible] punishment [illegible] to do the thrashing. Their faces drenched with the sweat of horror.

A third time the voice set up the echoes ringing before they could reach the other end. The echoes pursued them as they galloped at breakneck speed down the last miles of their journey, scarce aware that they had emerged on to the coast flats, where the palms built airy pavilions and white coral sand was flung up by the pounding hooves.

Gasping for breath, the horses' flanks flecked and labouring, they reached the beach at last, close to the spot where the little stream found the end of its long journeyings. Side by side they sat for a space, limp on the saddles, while Luna laughed and cried hysterically, and Glyndall mopped his face and swore. There was the schooner where on the blue lobbing to a fault as our able there was old Thornhill's store, not as it had always been, and there was the wide, clean sea, the road to freedom.



That made them jump they listened
he captain said 'You look all in

We are," said Glyndal., speaking
oudly as though to drown a pos-
ible interruption. "And we must
get right aboard Frinton's
suicided Have to report it
down the coast'

Why, I heard that" said old Thornhill 'But I took it for just a silly buzz on the bush telegraph"

They accepted drinks and, nervously on edge and restless, told their lies, fearful of the disembodied voice which would explode those lies with the truth. But the voice held its peace. Renewed by the harsh spirits, they made the last hasty preparations for departure. Old Thornhill would see to the boys and the horses, they fixed with him. And still the voice did not speak so that they began to believe it was snared back there among the echoes—yet despite this heartening conviction they continued to listen.

Grumbling, the captain consented to make a start They hurried him down the beach and into the boat, which crept out across the clean sea where witchcraft could not carry The captain sucked his cheeks and glanced askance at them, but the death of an insolvent planter was no affair of his. Lots of them passed out these hard times. Why not Frinton?

They had only to sail away

'Get aboard quick!" said Glyndal

The minute we can!" Luna glancing back at the jungle, which lay behind them like an out-distanced wave, smiled in triumph, and the colour returned to her full lips

On the veranda of the store they found the captain of the schooner and Thornhill drinking

Why, what's the matter?' asked old Thornhill, out of his wild red whiskers. Looks like you seen a ghost'

Old Thornhill, also, had his doubts. They'd looked mighty rattled and het-up. Might be a lot more in this business than met the eye. Very convenient for them When the magistrate came he'd mention his suspicions. He tugged his whiskers. Pity about Matt Frinton. Decent fellow if weak Much too good for that piece of tinted stuff Matt ought to have beaten her With crab-like steps he went up the beach to watch from his veranda the departure of the schooner

She fluttered away like a white moth

leaving only emptiness to the world's rim

Old Thornhill took another tot as he always did on these occasions.

I think I've earned one, too, Tom said the voice of Matthew Frinton, and the man himself stepped from the store

THE glass crashed from old Thornhill's hand

You? he gasped, a-goggle You? They said you was dead

'So I am, Tom,' said Frinton with infinite slyness "So I am." He flung himself down in a chair and chuckled

Someone's gone dippy that's all Thornhill decided, peering bewildered at his visitor

Someone's going dippy' Frinton corrected, but it's not you nor me Tom and there are two of them.

For the love of Pete, explain!" pleaded the trader with quite touching earnestness

'Certainly!" said the small, fever-drained man 'I must tell someone and so long as you'll swear to keep your mouth shut it may as well be you

I'll swear anything you like

Matthew Frinton sat forward gleefully rubbing his hands as if he washed them

Listen, Tom," he said taking the proffered glass, "this is the best thing ever happened When she shot me the gun was loaded with blanks

Blanks?"

You bet! I'd seen it coming—I fixed it If she'd had a look at me and found out I could have played her up for attempted murder but I figured she'd run straight to him to Glyndall Life's been pretty fair hell for me up there, Tom, with the pair of them carrying on under my nose

Bad egg that piece,' grunted Thornhill 'You should have beaten the hide off her

'I'm not being kind any more," said Frinton icily I've got them now She rode off and I came to life rolled a few on the veranda blood stains, you see—and lay doggo The boys were fine.

He told old Thornhill how well the brown people had served him, and Thornhill listened eyes bright with malicious enjoyment

So I've been with them, just as old Pakku said Put a length of bored bamboo into the bedroom and spoke to them waited in ambush Same words every time Murder! Murder will out! Murder Nearly drove them off their heads already'

Thornhill nodded complete agreement 'Scary said he

And how' Then at Barada we staged a show The local witch-doctor was fixed He did his stuff and I just stepped out of the bush back of his fire Had on a kit soaked in luminous paint Made the best-looking ghost ever you saw'

He gloated on the scene and old Thornhill said' Gee whizz!" awed by such ingenuity

'Then I stepped back in the bush whipped off the kit and vanished But I popped in during the night to remind them, in case they were sleeping too sound He swayed in ecstasy hugging himself Oh they're going to pay

Going to' I'd have said they'd done it Mighty disturbed kind of honeymoon

Frinton frowned sombrely and his chin jutted out. "It's only begun

But they've gone

I can follow They'll think they're quit of Pakku's curse and one night they'll be thinking how smart they are, and suddenly I'll be there at their window looking in Will that scare the love out of them?

Thornhill swore respect for a man who could plan such a revenge

They'll be in a crowd, and suddenly I be there—just for a moment. just the flash of my face scowling at them, grinning at them The telephone will ring, and there'll be my voice in her ear Murder Murder will out! Murder! Wherever they go, they'll hear those words, wherever they go, the man they killed will be with them

It will drive them mad!' shuddered Thornhill

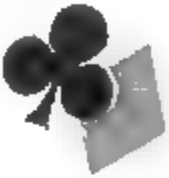
Precisely! Frinton agreed, smoothly The slow torture will drive them mad That was what I had in mind. And they will never even collect the insurance money There are ways of holding that up without betraying my jest too soon. And when they're mad those who act for them won't collect either, for at that point I'll put on flesh again, and no insurance company wants to believe in ghosts when they can find a dear client alive.'

He sat back and cackled feasting on the effect he had produced on old Thornhill who prided himself on being tough Oh, he had contrived a masterpiece

I said to her," he recalled through his savage joy 'when she aimed the gun at me Laugh if you like, but I'm glad this has come' I was, too. They were delivered into my hands. They—— He could not go on he was too amused

Yes, on the veranda of his home Matthew Frinton seeing his wife's dark eyes glittering behind the sights, had said just those words but they were the bravado of a man as good as dead Luna was right in claiming the last laugh Until that split second Matthew Frinton had not thought of a lie he might have done had only the cartridges in the pistol been blanks

# FORCING BIDS IN CONTRACT



By

## COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE

A FORCING bid is a bid which compels or "forces" the partner to respond for one round only in some cases and in others until a game bid is reached. These bids are necessary in Contract to give the partner a signal to keep the bidding open, otherwise the bidding may be dropped and a game can missed In Auction, as that is necessary is for the strong side to secure the final contract. It is of no consequence whether this is a game bid or less than a game bid In Contract it must be a game bid if a game can be made, otherwise a heavy loss is incurred

A forcing bid ensures that a game bid is not missed when a game is in sight. When the partners can count up 5½ Quick Tricks (or high-card Tricks) between them, then a game is in sight and a forcing bid should be made. On rare occasions, say once in a hundred times, one player has this great strength in his own hand and makes an original forcing bid of "two" in a suit It is more usual however for the 5½ high-card tricks to be divided between the two partners. When they are divided 2½ with one partner and 3 with the other, or 4 with one partner and 1½ with the other it is easy to discover that the partners hold game-going strength, and a forcing bid is made. At other times it is not so easy and a forcing bid may be missed The three occasions when a forcing bid should not be missed are then the following (1) When the necessary high-card tricks are all in one hand (2) When they are divided in the proportion of about 2½ in one hand and 3 in the other and (3) When they are divided in the proportion of about 4 in one hand and 1½ in the other. Examples of forcing bids on these three occasions are discussed further on

### The Forcing Idea

While these are the three outstanding game-demand situations the forcing idea is not limited to these. Here are some other forcing situations. In these, with one exception, forcing is for one round of bidding only

1 The One-over-One convention. It is usual now for all good players to regard a bid of one in a suit over a partner's bid of one" as a forcing bid, but not, of course, a game-demand bid. Thus if North, the dealer, bids One Club and South responds with One Diamond North must speak again, and if he bids One Heart South must speak again. If next, South bids One Spade, North must speak again. While the bidding is still within the range of one' in a suit it is forcing but forcing ends with any higher bid This One-over-One convention has been practically universally adopted by all the great players. It can be combined with any system.

2 The over-call in the opponent's suit is another important forcing bid When South let us say, has opened the bidding with One Heart, and West holds something like the following —

Spades: A, K, 10, 9
Hearts: A
Diamonds: Q, J, 10, 3
Clubs: K, Q, 9, 2

it is clear that East and West may have

game-going strength East may hold nothing of value in high-cards but may have a long suit with the help of which the partners can make a game How is West to signal to East that he himself has nearly game-going strength? West can do this by a forcing bid (in the opponent's suit) of Two Hearts Thus bid shows that he has (probably) no losing tricks in Hearts, and has a hand which is so powerful (at least four high-card tricks) that with very little help from his partner he can make a game If East has a 'bust' (a worthless hand the game may be impossible and for this reason the bid is not a game-demand old in this situation but only forcing for one round After East has once responded he need not speak again After the bidding situation as follows East (dealer), One Diamond South, One Heart, West, Two Hearts and this bid of Two Hearts is now a game-demand bid, because the partner, East, has already bid, showing at least 4½ Quick Tricks. The partners now know that they have between them game-going strength (and a probable Slam) and must keep the bidding open until a game call at least has been reached The difference between the two bidding situations should be noted In the latter case the partner has already shown strength by a bid whereas in the former case, he has not yet shown any strength

3. The informatory double is a forcing bid for one round of bidding only, so also is the "One (Vanderbilt, Club convention but these are outside the scope of the present discussion

### The Forcing Signal

APART from the One-over-One convention, the Club Convention the original two-bid and the Informatory Double the signal which conveys the forcing idea is given by jumping the bidding *one step only* and naming a fresh suit, *e.g.*, North One Spade East pass South, Three Clubs A bid of Two Clubs would have sufficed over One Spade The bid of Three Clubs was required for a forcing signal A jump bid in No Trumps is never forcing If the bidding is jumped more than one step, thus North, One Spade, East, pass, South, Four Clubs, it means that the bidder has great strength in Clubs and little outside strength and wants to play the hand with this suit but is conveying no forcing signal When the bidding is jumped up without change of suit opinion is divided Some regard a jump raise without change of suit as so as a forcing signal thus North One Spade East, pass, South, Three Spades means that North should make the game bid of four Spades. This is not a usual interpretation of a jump raise though no doubt support should be given in at least 90 per cent of cases It is best for the moderate player not to consider a raise in the same suit as forcing, because this interpretation robs the bid of its value as a maximum raise. The foregoing remarks can be summarized as follows

(1) Forcing bids are of two kinds, those which 'force' for one round of bidding only and those which 'force" all the way to a game bid

(2 The One-over-One convention, the Informatory Double and Club Convention force for one round of bidding only A bid in the opponent's suit, if made before the partner has bid or after he has passed), is forcing for one round only

(3. An original two-bid in a suit is a game-demand bid A response to a partner's opening bid which changes the suit and jumps the bidding *once* is also a game-demand bid A jump bid (by one step) with a change of suit by the original bidder after the partner has supported is also a game-demand bid Lastly, a bid in the opponent's suit after the partner has bid is a game-demand bid

### An Example of a Forcing Two-Bid

Some examples will now be given to show when forcing bids may be made Beginning with the forcing two bid, this shows five Quick Tricks *normally* but these may be shaded up or down according to the strength of the distribution The partner is assumed to have at least half a Quick Trick to make up the 5½ The opening two-bid may be made on a hand which has about nine playing tricks or, in other words, only four losing tricks. This is a better way to measure the strength of this particular type of hand than by counting only its Quick Tricks The bidder should not tie himself down to any particular minimum standard of Quick Tricks for the forcing two-bid but should use his judgment in making the bid on a hand which will produce nine playing tricks. Note the difference in the following two hands

| Hand I | Hand II |
|---|---|
| Spades: A, K, 8, | Spades: A, Q, J, 10, 9 |
| Hearts: A, K, 5, | Hearts: K, Q, J, 6, |
| Diamonds: K, 10, 4 | Diamonds: K, Q, J |
| Clubs: K, 9, 8, 6 | Clubs: |

There are five and a half Quick Tricks plus" in Hand I, yet it has a very weak distribution (4—3—3—3) and has more than four losing tricks. For these reasons it is better to avoid an opening two-bid on this hand and to make a bid of Three No Trumps.

In Hand II there are only four losing tricks. It is a good hand for an opening

forcing bid of Two Spades It has only three and a half Quick Tricks though more high-card tricks. There is a very great difference between these two hands The weaker hand in Quick Tricks has a practically certain game in Spades with the merest semblance of support in the dummy whereas the other hand with its great strength in Quick Tricks, may quite likely miss getting a game Many players fail after an opening forcing bid to secure a game because the bid has been based on high-card strength only Allowance should be made for distribution It is a good thing to have a standard of five Quick Tricks for a forcing two-bid, but this standard should, like many others, be elastic The bidder should acquire the habit of counting playing tricks as well as high-card tricks

### The Forcing Response

The Forcing Response is the next forcing bid in order of importance It is a bid made on rather better than three high-card tricks After South's opening bid of One Heart and a pass by West North holding three high-card tricks 'plus' with a strong distribution or three and a half high-card tricks with an average distribution, should give a forcing response

| Hand III | Hand IV |
|---|---|
| Spades— A, K, 5, 4 | Spades— A, K, 10, 4 |
| Hearts— Q, 10, 6. | Hearts— Q, J, 8. |
| Diamonds—K, 5, 4, 3 | Diamonds— K, Q, 10, 8. |
| Clubs— J, 8. | Clubs— J, 8. |

Hand III is just not strong enough for a forcing response. It has three high-card tricks but has a weak distribution. A singleton instead of a doubleton would have made all the difference. With a singleton a forcing response could have been given Many players commit the error of making a weak forcing response on three bare high-card tricks this often ends in disaster Hand IV has also a weak distribution, but has three and a half high-card tricks justifying a forcing response of Two Spades over One Heart This response is a jump of one more than necessary, with a change of suit, and is made in a biddable suit Spades here The bid does not as yet convey any meaning of denial of Hearts The bidder may or may not have support for Hearts. This will be revealed in the later bidding meantime the bidding must be kept open until a game call is reached

When playing the One-over-One convention North, holding Hand IV or Hand III, should bid One Spade over his partner's One Heart South must then bid again Had South opened with One Spade instead of One Heart North holding Hand IV, would have made a forcing response in Diamonds (*i.e.*, a bid of Three Diamonds, one more than necessary, and a change of suit) whether playing the One-over-One convention or not

### The Subsequent Forcing Bid.

THE next forcing bid to be considered is the subsequent forcing bid, *i.e.*, the forcing bid which follows an original bid and a response, thus North One Spade East, pass, South Two Clubs, West pass, North Three Hearts Here North has jumped the bidding in his second bid by one step and has changed the suit, the two sure signals of a forcing bid at any stage of the bidding He had here a chance to make an opening forcing bid, but was not strong enough After hearing his partner's free response he then knew that together the partners had game-going strength. The subsequent forcing bid is made on a minimum of four high-card tricks and a favourable distribution Here are two examples which will show the type of hand on which this bid should or should not be made

| Hand V | Hand VI |
|---|---|
| Spades— A, K, 10, 5, 3 | Spades— K, 7, 10, 4 |
| Hearts— 5, K, 7, 6, 2 | Hearts— A, 7, 10, 8 |
| Diamonds— 4 | Diamonds— K, 4 |
| Clubs— 9, 8 | Clubs— K, 10, 2 |

On these hands, after an opening bid of One Spade, and a response of Two Clubs by the partner, the original bidder has good additional values for a further bid On Hand V there is normally a certain game in either Hearts or Spades after the partner's response The hand has four Quick Tricks and a forcing bid of Three Hearts (one more than necessary, and a change of suit, should now be made to ensure an eventual game bid On Hand VI there is far from the same certainty of game. This hand has four high-card tricks, but only three Quick Tricks. The suits are very gappy and the distribution is weak. The hand is a risky one for a forcing bid of Three Hearts. A bid of Two Hearts is sufficiently encouraging and is safer because unless the partner can bid again no game is missed Subsequent forcing bids are best reserved for a minimum of four high-card tricks with strong values (not merely Jacks and Tens, or with weaker values and very favourable distribution. With a strong distribution the requirements for this bid like many others can of course be shaded down a little, but the bidder must be careful about depending too much upon Jacks and Tens to complete his game-demand requirements

# A TUNE ON THE

ANY evenin that Walter Spicer was able to get away from the wife, said Mr Patrick Murphy, he always made his way up to Maxwell Simms's farm on the Red Hill, an' I used to wonder why. I could understand well enough that he would want to get away from the wife, for she was a dry, gatherin' bein', that thought a husband was meant for nothin else but makin' an savin money, an was little use for anythin else herself, but as far as talk or amusement went I couldn't see that Walter was likely to be much better off with ould Maxwell Simms.

Not that Maxwell was much older nor Walter—the pair of them was over fifty; but of two very cautious old boys, Maxwell was the cautiouser an', bein' a bachelor, was the simpler of the two an' knew even less about life. But the truth of the matter is there was neither of them the kind of man you'd have picked to go out for a real reckless kind of a night with.

More nor once as I walked down the by-road past Maxwell's house I'd taken a peep at the pair of them sittin very serious one on each side of the kitchen hearth. They were always deep in crack, an' I let myself begin to wonder what under the heavens they were talkin about that was so interestin, till in the end I had to find out what it was or burst. So I began to drop into Maxwell Simms's of a night myself. The two of them was very shy of me at first, an' many a night we sat a full half a pipeful of tobacco between every word was spoke, but I lay low; an' asked modest questions, an' was as wary as if I was stalkin' wood-pigeons, till at last they come out of their shells again an fell into their old ways of crack.

An' what did they talk about, them two more nor middle-aged men, that weighty an discreet-lookin' that you'd have thought butter wouldn't have melted in their mouths? Weemin—what else? Not scandal-mongerin, mind you, or loose talk—Walter had been caught young, an Maxwell was single, an' they both thought all the weemin they didn't know was angels, the

*"I wrote her a letter askin' ses Walter, moanin' like the bottom of the sheet with been playing*

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# TRIANGLE

young weeman anyway—but just weeman, what they were like an' what they did an' what they didn't an' who was a fine lump of a girl an' would maybe take a good court, an' who was settin her cap at So-an'-So an' was a likely piece enough, but with a shade too much white in her eye not to be worth watchin', an' so on. But the burden of their song was that they wished they'd been a bit more enterprisin in their own young days.

Of course they both made excuses for themselves. Walter used to lament that he had married so early—not that he wasn't lucky in the woman he got, he'd say, loyal enough—but still a man should have a while off the halter before he was put in the stall.

As for Maxwell Simms he made what play he could with his disaster over the girl that was now Robert Henryson's widow, but you could see that he wasn't humbuggin even himself. Maxwell had took a fancy to her when he was thirty-two or three, an' could have had her, too, for he was a handsome-lookin fellow enough, in a

LYNN DOYLE

*Illustrated by* ILLINGWORTH

*her to meet me one night,' a sick cow. "An' I plastered as many crosses as if I'd fox and geese"*

pale-faced watery way an his father had just died an' left him a hundred an twenty acres of land an the girl was fifteen years younger nor himself an' as romantic as only a girl could be that was brought up by an owl maiden aunt. If Maxwell had had the pluck of a louse she was his for the askin that was plain for any eye to see, but he hung back, an' sent her books an fetched her posies, an kept three clear foot of road between him an' her when he left her home instead of shortenin her breath now an then with a few good hugs. In the end Robert Henryson swept her up into his arms an had her kneelin beside him in church before she knowed what was happenin to her, an likin' it well enough, though Maxwell an' her had been seen standin cryin at her father's yard-gate two nights before she married Robert.

However, whether twelve years of a big red-faced masterful husband had put Maxwell's nose out of joint for good an all, or whether—an most people believed it—Maxwell had been no more enterprisin at forty-five nor he was at thirty-three, Mrs Henryson didn't marry again, an' Maxwell an her was good friends of about five miles distance from each other, an got no closer.

Anyhow Maxwell hadn't come very boisterous out of his one bit of courtin', an any information he contributed to the hearth-side crack was got at second-hand.

But as time went on I began to notice a change comin over both of them. It may be that he was playin' up to me, but after a while Walter begun to throw out hints that he wasn't just a stick-in-the-mud altogether an had more experience with weemin than people might think goin' on to convey that even a married man might, as he put it, find someone now an then to turn an look back at him when he met her on the road, an' hintin that he was the married man.

An' it just turned ould Maxwell far green, that's all. I can still see him squirmin in his chair the night Walter let drop casual like that the kiss of a girl of eighteen was very sweet. I think Walter must have twigged it, too, for after that when he'd fall into what you might call his concealed boastin he'd always keep his eye on Maxwell.

But after a while there come a change. Walter hadn't things all his own way. First of all Maxwell begun to agree in a very serious, weighty way with Walter's remarks, as much as to say "I know a thing or two myself", an' presently he would now an then come out with some experiences of a similar kind that might have been his own or might not, till after a while the devil a hint or a yarn Walter let fall but Maxwell capped it with a far better one.

Walter was clean puzzled. I could see that Maxwell had more brains than him, an' did the thing more cunnin' altogether, an' I noticed Walter lookin' at him now an' then as if he was wonderin could there possibly be any foundation for it all.

As for myself their two lives had been an open book to me for thirty years, an I knowed right well they must both of them be lyin'. But if you keep on smellin' the cheese you'll end in the trap, an, after the first bewilderment, I had to give in that it was only what I should have expected when I found that one of them was beginnin to practise what he preached.

I COULDN'T help remarkin one night that Walter Spicer was even better pleased with himself nor usual, just bubblin' over with high spirits an fun, throwin out more hints than ever about the divil a fellow with the girls he might have been if he had liked, an winkin an laughin very knowin at the heel of his story that there was life in the old dog yet.

An as the night went on it begun to dawn on me that he was lookin younger an fresher, an' goin' into the matter more careful I observed that not only had he trimmed off the greyin' ends of his whiskers an' put on a silk tie, but that though he had his workin' coat an trousers on, he was wearin the waistcoat of his Sunday suit. I leaned across him to turn down the wick of the lamp, an got a whiff of hair-oil.

As the two of us walked down the loanin from Maxwell's that night, I asked him just on chance who was the girl I saw him talkin with one evenin' on the Ballygullion road.

He jumped as if he'd got a bullet.

"It wasn't me," he stutters. "Whoever it was, it wasn't me."

"I'm not askin whether it was you or not, Walter," sez I, "an anyway I'm no informer——. But who was the girl?"

He said nothin for a minit, an then started to laugh in a titterin kind of a way.

"Not a word to mortal. Pat," sez he. "It was that wee Miss Fitzgibbon out of Torrance's shop. Man," sez he, stoppin an' turnin to face me on the road, "that one's a divil."

An a divil she was as far as I had ever heard minded her job in Mr Torrance's all right, an' as mim as a mouse in business hours, but would rather sell a ninepenny tie to a young fellow than a pair of blankets to a married woman. She could mind number one all the same an had the name of bein a very expensive sweetheart.

"Walk on," sez I to Walter. "You're not with her now. How did you come to be with her?"

"Dammit," sez he, "simple enough. I liked the look of her in the shop, an

*"That's not Walter Spicer's writin',"*
*sez I, all surprised*
*"Yes it is," sez she, "an' his*
*initials—'W S'"*

latterly fell into the habit of walkin across from the men s department an buyin some wee thing from her for the w fe—not that I ever dared give her them , they're all in the bottom of a potato sack in the loft this minit—an presently this wee lassie an' I begin to pass a joke together I asked her one day when she was comin' for a walk with me, an' here last Wednesday evenin as I was drivin out of the town don t I see her in front of me, walkin on the foot-path. I had my hand out to whip up the horse an' get safe past, for truth I misdoubted what she might be up to. when she turned round an' saw me, an crooked her finger for me to get off What could I do, Pat ? I stood ten minits on the roadside talkin to her, an thought it was an hour for it was clear enough for anybody to make us out a hundred yards away '

' When are you to meet her again ? ' sez I

He stopped dead in the road a second time

' I w sh the devil had her," sez he. ' I'm to meet her in Jackson's loanin' next Wed nesday an hour later in the evenin'—an listen to me Pat if it comes to the ears of the wife I may take my ticket for the States. '

You needn't go, sez I

I know that." sez he, scratchin' his head a bit testy ' But, dammit I'll go this once She s a slarter thon wee girl an I'll have one walk with her if I should be hanged for it Sure I ll only be young once But for the love of heaven don't let on to Maxwell Simms. '

' I won t need to, ' sez I There s only half a mile between his house an yours, an he ll be able to hear your wife from his own yard."

But I knew Walter wasn t goin' to listen to me

HOWEVER a couple or three weeks ran on, an' I heard no rumours, though I opened my ears pretty wide. I walked up the length of Maxwell's two nights, but Walter wasn't there , an Maxwell an' I had a couple of quiet sensible chats together, with weemin kind never mentioned between us at all.

But the third night i went there was Walter The first look I took at him I seen his whiskers were gone altogether, an he d cut his moustache instead of bitin it an' I knowed he was still on the warpath an' still fairly well pleased w th himself

' I ve been out with her twice since sez he at last as I never spoke for the first fifty yards on our way home. " You may laugh at me but, man, thon s a great bit of stuff. I never knew I was alive before He walked on a little before he spoke again ' She's costin' me money, Pat sez he

I thought it would come to that," I sez, a bit dry

Oh nothin' much, he puts in. " I fetched her a sixpenny bottle of scent that night I told you about. when I met her in Jackson s loanin' Now she wasn t pleased with it," sez he. waggin his head, " I could see that. I asked her if there was anythin she would like, an' she said she was in want of stockin s. I thought it a bit flighty of her, mind you However what could I do ? She told me she could get a pair wholesale. at three-an -eleven, an I gave her the money an went without a smoke for ten days over it—an' when I met her again here the cheap ones had been sold out, an' she'd had to buy a pair at seven-an sixpence She said they were twice as thick, an well worth the differs an' wanted me to look what they were like but I let on I'd left my matches behind, an she hadn t one on her Did you notice how glum Maxwell was to-night ? ' sez Walter, break in' off

He wasn t very chatty, ' sez I

I told him about me an' herself sez Walter, chucklin , before you came in It was too good to keep. An' listen he dion't open his lips for a solid half-hour Poor ould fellow, he would like people to think he's a bit of a lady-killer himself, but I doubt he'll never break much delf as far as the weemin are concerned.

I was very much of the same opanion. too , but still I was curious to see how he would take Walter s break-out So I stopped him on the road the next time I met him an' asked him straight what he thought of it

Well well, well he says in his quick nervous way ' poor Walter I wouldn't blame poor Walter He has very dry quarters at home A nice girl, a nice girl Free in her way ay, free , but has her head screwed on. Sport herself a bit, even with Walter , but no chance for him when there's a bachelor about, no chance at all.

I looked at him, an he was all amiles an' wee bits of laughs, an' knowin' nods.

Lord bless us,' sez I to myself, the right breakin on me. " I do believe, Maxwell, sez I ' you've been lookin after her your-self

Tut. tut, tut.' sez he, glancin ar round with his finger to his lips , " not a word—not a word to Walter ? " sez he Is that right ? "

Not a syllable, sez I fair burstin to hear an

' Just a wee walk, a wee walk now an then , an' a trifle of a present Gloves you

know. Safe thing to give a girl. Tells me all about Walter. Laughs. An' then *he* tells me. Funny—what?

You'd better watch yourself, Maxwell, sez I, unless you mean to marry her.

Marry her? " sez Maxwell. 'Tut, no, no. Kept out of it before. Keep out of it this time. Just a bit of flirtin'. Teach Walter a thing or two, eh? Poor Walter. Funny—what? Funny?"

It's funny about everybody as far as weemun's concerned, sez I to myself as I was makin' my way home, but this is the quarest tea-party I've encountered yet. If that wee divil of a girl doesn't knock more nor fun out of it I'm Dutch. An' if I want to keep out of a witness-box the less I hear from this pair of lads the better.'

But Walter carried his troubles into my own barn three weeks afterwards.

What's wrong, Walter?" sez I, starin' at him. For you look like the end of the world.

'It's the end of me, Pat, that's all, sez he—an' you couldn't express the misery he put into it. She has asked me for the loan of twenty-five pounds.

The *loan* of it? sez I.

She *says* the loan of it, sez he, 'sweet an' smilin', too, she says it on the surface. But there's threats an' lawyers' letters an' expoorin at the bottom of it.

'But what have you been up to? sez I, that you're so scared.

Nothin'," sez he, "or not much. But enough to do for me. I've been out with her five or six times after dark, an' one of the times I was supposed to be at the Session of the Church. An' I've bought her a silk muffler, an' a pair of shoes with heels on them, begob, like stilts.

You'd better lend her the money,' sez I.

The wife keeps everythin' we have, sez he, "an' has all under lock an' key an' knows the very water-marks on the notes, let alone the numbers. I may go an' drown myself.

Wait now," sez I thinkin'. "The girl can't very well risk turnin' nasty. It's only her word against yours.

"I wrote her a letter," sez Walter, moanin' like a sick cow. I wrote her a letter askin' her to meet me one night."

That's not actionable, anyway,' sez I. Cheer up.

'Oh, but Pat," sez Walter, "there was a wee smear of ink on the bottom of the sheet, an' when I seen it the divil entered into me an' I put a line over it an' made a cross."

"Never mind," sez I, smotherin' a laugh. Say the whole thing's a smear.'

'Ay, but that's not all," he laments. The blood riz to my head at the very thought of kissin' her, an' I plastered the whole bottom of the sheet with as many crosses as if I'd been playin' fox an' geese. Oh, sufferin' duck,' sez he, "an' me only fifteen month elder a month ago." An' poor Walter sits down on a bunch of straw an' fair burst into tears. Save me, Pat," sez he, "if you can, an' I'll never look at fur or feather again."

We kept up an' down the barn I s'pose a quarter of an hour, but not a thing came into my head at any use.

'I denied the letter, Pat,' sez Walter, shakin' his head, 'if that's any help to you.'

'Did you not sign it?' I asked him.

Just my initials," sez he. 'An' not too like my usual, for I misdoubted the look of all them crosses at the last minute.'

But you turned up to meet her," sez I.

Oh, to hell," sez he, "I suppose I did." An' down goes his head on his hands again.

I started my quarter-deck tramp again. All at once an idea dawned on me, an' grew an' grew. An' the more ridiculous it seemed the more I thought I would try it.

Walter," sez I, "will you leave this whole affair to me, an' not interfere at all, till I tell you I'm beat? I'll have to see the girl, mind you, an' tell her I know everythin'."

So I went into the shop at dinner time on a day there was no market, an' with buyin' a tie an' takin' it back because I didn't like the colour I got her in the shop with Torrance an' the other girl away for their meal.

Miss Fitzgibbon," sez I, "are you hard-hearted?"

She looked at me a bit more attentive an' after all, I was under sixty.

I've always a soft spot for a nice man, sez she, with a wee sideways glint, an' left the next move to me.

"Listen, my dear," sez I, "I'm too old to be worth powder an' shot, but you have made terrible havoc of Walter Spicer."

She broke into a smile in spite of herself.

'Is he very bad?" sez she.

The seven senses are frightened out of him," sez I.

Serve him right," sez she, "the old fool! What business has he runnin' after girls at his time of life, an' him with a woman of his own at home. A good lesson! I do him no harm."

Tell me now,' sez I, "that's not what you're in this business for? Is it money you want?"

"An' fun," sez she, lookin' up at me all smiles an' impertence.

I'll give in he's funny," sez I. "But now, listen. There's no money in it. A walk or two's neither here nor there. You have nothin' to see

"I have a letter, sez she, all love an' kisses." She smiled up at me again an' pouted her lips, an' troth, she looked very mischievous an' takin

"Show t to me, sez I "Honour bright you can trust me That's not Walter Spicer's writin'," sez I all surprised, by the way

"Yet it is,' sez she, "an his initials— W S.'

'It's 'M S., "sez I "That's what it is An that writin' is Maxwell Simms's Now you needn't let on you're as bewildered as you look," sez I, "for I know about you an Maxwell too.'

"How much do you know?" sez she borin' gimlet-holes in me with her eyes.

So I told her, an' she put back her head and laughed till I thought she'd have old Torrance down from his dinner

"The old loony," sez she at last, wipin' her eyes. 'To think of him tellin' you The letter's not his writin' all the same," sez she. "I see what you're after, Mr Foxy Murphy If I said it was his writin it couldn't be Walter Spicer's.

If Maxwell Simms was vain enough to admit it was his writin'," sez I 'he'd be a better mark for a few pounds than Walter An easier hit for he's a single man'

She looked at me, very considerin with her head on one side, an then she began to laugh again till I thought she'd never stop

'Look here,' sez she, when she'd done "you're far an' away the nicest oul fellow of the three, an if you were younger there's no sayin' what I might do with you if I laid my mind to it I'll tell you the truth I'm trysted to marry a boy in Belfast, an' I've no clothes If you get me twenty-five pounds out of Maxwell, I'll let Walter Spicer off with no more of a fright than he's got An I'll give you half-a-dozen kisses into the bargain

"Divil a fear of you," sez I steppin back from the counter 'But damn it, the likes of you mustn't go to the altar in red flannel I'll do my best for you It's a pity the oul fellow won't see you in your trimmin's'

"He might yet" sez she the divil's own light in her eyes again 'He has a big farm, an' money But I think not," shakin her head very melancholy "The worst of it is, I like my boy Out with you!' sez she "The sooner you get me married the better

The sooner I'm done with this job the better," sez I to myself as I went down the street. "I'll go straight up to Maxwell's an' see is he as vain an oul peacock as I think he is."

'Maxwell,' sez I to him beckonin him into his own parlour 'you'll be surprised to see me at this time of the day but I'm just come straight out of Torrance's shop

He lept as if I'd stuck a pin in him

'You didn't say anythin'?" sez he What I told you?"

'Not a word," sez I "But just out of curiosity I brought your name up to hear what she'd say Dammit, sez I, you're a terrible ould rip with the weemin. You have thon girl dyin about you.'

"What, what?" sez he all lifted up "She has a fancy for me, eh?"

"She could talk about nothin else all the time I was in the shop how tall an' straight you were just like an officer in the militia, an the distinguished look you have with that wee touch of grey in your hair You're

*As I came near Walter's farm, a trap drove up behind me, an' stopped. It was Maxwell, all excited-lookin'. He reached me an envelope.*

a devil, that's what you are. It's a shame for you."

"You didn't believe me, Pat," sez he, fair tyin' himself in knots with delight. "You didn't think I could get a girl, but what do you say now? Pity I'm not younger, eh? or, mind you, I'd make history yet."

"She doesn't like them young," sez I. She told me that. But Maxwell, you oughtn't to be writin' her letters, the poor child."

"Letters," he stutters, lookin' at me dumbfounded. "Letters did you say?"

"Now, now," sez I, waggin' my finger at him, "don't deny it. You only wrote her one, I know, but I saw it in her hand a lot covered with crosses for kisses, an' she kissed every one of them over 'n over again. But maybe she just made it up herself," sez I. I've heard of girls doin' that when they were fond of a man——

No, no, no, breaks in Maxwell, very eager. I wrote to her—a wee note—just a wee line—one night I was to meet her an' couldn't. I'll write to her again. It's easier than talkin'. I'm a great one, fellow too, am'n't I now?"

"You're a terrible man, Maxwell," sez I. "But let the one letter do you. It's not well to put too much on paper when you're dealin' with women, even the best of them. I'll see you one of these days again an' hear how you're gettin' on with her," I sez, gettin' up. "For," thinks I, "I'll just let that sink in."

So that night instead of goin' up to Maxwell's I went round to Walter Spicer's an' told him the whole story, first an' last.

"The thing's over now," sez I, "as far as you're concerned. Maxwell has acknowledged he wrote the letter. I'll put the girl up to threaten him, an' he'll give me twenty pound or so to buy it. Then I'll tear it up an' all will be well. An' don't you show yourself within ten mile of that girl again, for I tell you her name's danger."

"I know that," sez Walter, "an' of course I'm obliged to you. But I would like well to have another word with her, an' part friends, for all her tricks. To think of that old idiot!" He put back his head an' laughed, but there was vexation in the sound of it. "If I was only single," sez he, "I would show him!"

"Now don't be actin' dog in the manger, Walter," sez I. "If he's to pay the piper let him call a bar or two of the tune. I'm goin' to give it away that he's been runnin'

after Miss Fitzgibbon, so as he'll boast his head well into the noose before she makes the spring. The first night you're up at his house do you tell him you hear she's dyin' about him.'

'I'll see him in hell first,' sez Walter, very sour. 'Tell her to stick him for *fifty* pounds!' he calls very cautious after me as I turned away.

In about five or six days my own rumour begun to come back to me, so I thought things was ripe, an' dropped in to see Miss Fitzgibbon.

'Quick,' sez I, 'I've no time to spare. The boss'll be down from his dinner any minit. Maxwell has admitted to the letter. Scribble me a line that you hear he's after somebody else, an' that he'll either have to give you twenty-five pounds or you'll take a breach again him, an' I'll guarantee to have the money in your hand this time to-morrow or the day after.'

'Twenty-five?'" sez she, tappin' her teeth with the handle of the pen. 'Say thirty,' sez she, with a flash of the eyes up at me, 'an' I'll make it seven kisses.'

'An' listen,' sez I, lettin' on not to heed her, 'you're to keep your hands off Walter, remember.'"

'That sounds as if he wasn't cured of me yet,'" sez she writin' away. 'You will pay me twenty-five pounds,'" she reads out, "'or marry me.' You left out the last three words,' sez she, provokin' me. 'I'm likin' Maxwell better now that I'm maybe losin' him.'

'Oh, put them in if you like,' sez I. 'He's not that big a fool.'

I read the letter to Maxwell in his own parlour with one eye on him, so as to shape my course accordin' as he would be scared or fly into a rage, an' all he did was to skip over to the fireplace an' look at himself in the glass.

'I do not look my age, or half it,' sez he, an' I seen for the first time that he had a new suit on him. 'Would she, Pat?' sez he, all twitters, 'do you think she would? Had my eye on her this long time. Pick of the bunch, eh?'

'Lord bless us,' I thinks to myself, 'I've done it this time. What bunch?' sez I, a bit snappy.

"Two girls here to-day already,' sez he, fair burstin' with conceit an' pride, 'an' the two mothers. News gone round. Nobody thought I had it in me. What about her, Pat, eh? Could I face her? She's young, mind you,' sez he, coolin' down a trifle, "an' lively, lively. The widow would be terribly gunked,' sez he, brightenin' up again.

'Maxwell,' sez I, "don't be rash about this. There's no hurry. You can marry her anytime you like. That's plain from the way she's rushin' you. But for me you'd have had that letter through a solicitor. Keep away from her a couple of days, an' consider the matter carefully, an' then come down an' let me know.'

"*One* day, Pat,' sez he, "One, one. They're after me like flies. Man, why didn't I break out before? I might have had the crow over the widow twenty years ago.'"

IT was the widow's house I was sittin' in, less nor an hour afterwards, for I seen only the one way out of the mess my own cleverness had led me into. She sat down forninst me in the parlour after puttin' a glass of whiskey in my hand, an' as I looked at her there, sonsy an' sensible, with her hair still yellow, an' a laugh now an' then in her eye even yet, I had to wonder why she never got a second.

The rumour of Maxwell's courtin' hadn't reached her, an' I told her as much as I could do an' keep Walter out of it.

"She'll marry him,'" I wound up. "He'll get no chance at all. She'll just take him by the ear an' trail him to the church.'"

Mrs. Henryson began to laugh quietly, shakin' her head in mock melancholy at the same time.

"She's right,'" sez she. "It's the only way Maxwell'll ever be married. I suppose it's the farm an' money?'" she asked me, after a minute or two.

'Think of the man's age,' sez I.

"Oh, I know it's not love,'" sez Mrs. Henryson. 'You need to be fond of a man when he's young to be fond of him at fifty. But what do you want me to do?'"

'Go over to him to-morrow,' sez I, 'an' tell him as an old friend what a fool he's goin' to make of himself. He had his chance once upon a time, an' missed it an' rued it, but there's no use lettin' him be gobbled up now. A word might save him, an' seein' that all is past an' over between the pair of you, it's you can say that word best. An' to tell you the truth,' sez I, "I'd just hate to see that little hussy sittin' mistress of Tubareen farm.'

She thought for a minit or two again.

'I'm sorry, Mr. Murphy,' sez she at last. "You mean well, I know, but I can't interfere.'"

There was no word from Maxwell all the next day. When I went up to his house it was in darkness, an' the very servant-girl out, so I thought I'd step the length of Walter Spicer's to see if I could pick up any news there, for to tell you the truth I was more or less on eggs.

As I came near Walter's farm a trap

drove up behind me, an stopped. It was Maxwell, all excited-lookin' He reached me an envelope

"Give Miss Fitzgibbon that," sez he. "Mum, tell her An tear up the letter tear it—all nonsense" He stood a minit sayin' nothin' "Pat," he stutters, 'forget that what I said about gunkin the widow childish childish" He climbed on the trap, an took up the reins 'She's marryin' me," he sez, half-chokin' "Oh man," sez he "the waste of time!"

He hit the horse a skelp, an' was round the bend in a clatter of hoofs an gravel before I came to.

I made my way on down to Walter's an fetched him out to the stable on some excuse, an' struck a match an' showed him the five five-pound notes.

"D-n her!" he cries out, in a splutter of rage, "I'm the right fool. I went back to her 'sez he "I was that mad to think of Maxwell kissin' her, an' she told me she was goin' to be married, an' had only been laughin at him An' I went all soft an' fatherly about her, an' promised her a weddin'-present if she'd kiss me good-bye. an stole three pound was hid at the back of the china cupboard at home She took the two notes——'

'Three, you mean" sez I

'No, not three," he snaps at me "I had to tear up one of the pound notes into wee bits to persuade the missis that mice had nibbled the lot. . "

'Oh, well' sez I "you got your kiss, anyway

"No.' sez he, very savage. not even that—the wee hell-cat She threw up her head as I made a glam at her an all I did was to break the two front teeth of my top plate again her chin."

I handed Miss Fitzgibbon the twenty-five pounds next day

Tell me sez I, as I tore the etter to pieces, "just for curiosity sake—did he ever get as much as a kiss out of you?'

She put back her wicked wee head an' laughed with delight an badness till I found myself smilin, too, just to listen to her

"Is it Maxwell?' sez she—an' off she went in another kink "Why the old fool never spoke to me in his life!'

# ACROSTICS

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 241

This makes no profit, that pays through the nose
Between them stands the worker of their woes

1. This sort of victory often means defeat.
2. Half animal is bare, or cash complete.
3. A short-lived town that saw fanatic's doom.
4. Dire straits, of sanguine British hopes the tomb.
5. Modest, with haughty dynasty removed.
6. By members of the leisure race approved
7. This rhymes with number six, and should be last
8. If you behead this wanderer, all is past.

W. J. B.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 242

Are you anxious to guess
The solution with speed?
Well! The first you possess
And the last means in deed.
To solvers that clamour
"Pray who can this be?
Regardless of grammar.
I murmur, "It's me!"

1. She skims the waves with wings of white
2. This barn recalls a border fight
3. A bird of prey comes into sight
4. Such flouts bring revolts to light.
5. Exorbitate, the end is bright

SLEV

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 240.

First, a creature we find,
Of a curious kind,
Its quills for protection are well designed.
Then we go to the Zoo,
And we wander all through,
And look for a beast with a hump or two.

1. Nature has spotted it and we
Can spot the creature easily
2. A useful shellfish, very good,
Except in certain months, as food.
3. A horned monster, thick its hide,
Half of its lengthy name provide
4. A shellfish proclamations show
Quite clearly all you want to know
5. Here, tacking head and tail, is named
A bird for Christmas dinner famed.
6. Hard at the last, the fish here seen
Is not unlike a big sardine,
7. An Eastern land where deer abound
And elephants are also found.
8. A boy, a tool, one of a pair.
With crabs or lobsters have a care
9. A garment, island, kind of cow,
It lacks its leading letter now.

PAN

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | P | a r | | D |
| 2. | O | v a | e | R |
| 3. | R | h | n | O |
| 4. | C | a | | M |
| 5. | U | r k | | L |
| 6. | P | i c h a r | | D |
| 7. | T | n d | | A |
| 8. | N | a p p e | | R |
| 9. | E | r s e | | Y |

NOTES.—Light 8. Rhinoceros 4. Turkey 6. Jerse

# PERPLEXITIES

### 1,141.—TO A "T"

BELOW are two sets of clues. The first of each pair is intended to guide you to a certain word the letters of this word, *with the addition of a T in each instance*, will, when suitably re-arranged, form another word for which a clue is also given. Thus, if the clues were *an aperture* becomes *a large inn*, the solution would be *hole—hotel*. What are the words that fit the following?—

*That which is often found on a church* becomes *a clergyman.*
*A strong plant* becomes *an idea.*
*Neat* becomes *a song.*
*A celestial spirit* becomes *a slaughterer.*
*Course through life* becomes *a raised space.*
*A bird* becomes *a divine drink.*
*To let down* becomes *a gardening tool.*
*A spangle* becomes *an inquiry.*
*Unsoiled* becomes *a surgical instrument.*
*A youngster* becomes *a reaping time.*

### 1,142.—A THREE-SPEED JOURNEY

SMITH generally cycles to the station, doing the distance in six minutes; sometimes he walks, taking a quarter of an hour to get there; very occasionally he does the journey at a brisk trot, taking ten minutes.

Last Tuesday he set out on his bicycle, but the chain broke when he had gone only a part of the way, and so abandoning the machine he proceeded to walk stationwards. But when he had walked just as long a time as he had cycled, he realized that he must trot the rest of the way if he wished to catch his train. So he did, the trot occupying one-third of the time of the whole journey. How long did the journey take?

### 1,143.—TONING IT DOWN.

A TRADER told me the other day that he made a profit of fifteen per cent in his business. I was surprised that it was not more, but I found on inquiry that he estimated the profit as a percentage of what he, rightly or wrongly, called his "turnover"—by which he meant the sum of outlay and receipts.

What would the above profit come to if expressed as a percentage of the outlay alone?

### 1,144.—FINDING ONE'S MATCH.

A MANCHESTER reader desires to place another match puzzle before you. Six matches are used in making the fraction of one-seventh, as shown. The problem is to move one only of these matches and make the fraction equal to one.

### 1,145.—WATCH YOUR STOP.

I HAVE been asked to repeat a kind of puzzle in which a number of disconnected sentences have been put together without any marks of punctuation. Your task is to read it aloud, without any previous preparation, in the presence of an audience. The time limit is two minutes.

Some people don't like tickling policemen when on duty are dignified in manner controlling the traffic with skill patience and poker are both good card games if you have a wife cherish her for at least a fortnight before the summer holiday mothers are usually busy annoying the other members of the family is the regular practice of little tony though his father has often smacked him on the bare possibility of a thunderstorm some nervous old ladies retire to bed and stay there till the trouble blows over a little boy was asked by his nurse what did you choose that book to be read out of to for is fetching the milk the youngster carried it in a bottle of boss sugars there is a remarkable one in our choir who makes faces and bows the inspector asked the sculptor answered the pupil thus winning a credit mark antony said lend me your ears if your have tears to shed the garment is wasteful without first patching the rents charged for a set of false teeth he refused to pay as he had only had one stopping some hikers cover excessively long distances without a stop finishing up sometimes in a coma the colon end of the panama canal is on the atlantic ocean greyhounds are fitted with tape machines cocktail bars and every luxury man can devise.

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

### 1,138.—POULTRY DEALING.

21 TURKEYS and 15 geese.

These were the transactions:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 21 turkeys bought at 21s. each | | £22 1 0 |
| 15 geese sold at 21s. each | £15 15 0 | |
| 4 turkeys sold at 25% profit | 5 5 0 | |
| 15 chickens sold at 2s. each | 1 10 0 | |
| | £22 10 0 | |

Thus leaving the poultry farmer with 9s. more than when he started.

### 1,139.—FIGURES IN LITERATURE.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
H U B A S N C R I É = A NICE BRUSH

Whence:—

2 1 6 0 3 5
B U C H A N
2 1 7 5 4
B U R N S
2 3 7 7 8 9
B A R R I É

### 1,140.—NOVELISTS AND THEIR WORKS.

(1) *seven sons*—STEVENSON *a car ride*—CATRIONA.

(2) *children's stakes*—CHARLES DICKENS *one word deal*—EDWIN DROOD.

(3) *ripe style*—PRIESTLEY *mail coat pagan*—ANGEL PAVEMENT.

(4) *going so dull I*—LOUIS GOLDING, *at last restore me*—MAGNOLIA STREET.

If you prefer a Cork-Tipped Cigarette.. SMOKE THE BEST

PLAYER'S

CORK TIPPED

10 for 6D 20 for 11½D

For the Pipe — PLAYER'S NAVY CUT TOBACCO

N.C.C.151 C

*Inquiries should be addressed to "MILADY," c/o THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 8 11 Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C 2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply.*

**The Ideal Home Exhibition.**

If the pleasure of the heart is to be judged by the pleasure of the eye, then the delight of hundreds of thousands of people is assured when the eagerly-awaited *Daily Mail* Ideal Home Exhibition is opened at Olympia, London, W., on Wednesday, March 29th, by Mrs. Stanley Baldwin. This year an attempt is to be made to express in concrete form that quiet spirit of optimism and faith in the future which even the most conservative cannot conceal at the steady revival of our national fortunes.

**Rainbow City**

Art and Science calling to their aid several recent notable discoveries in illumination, will combine to create in the Grand Hall of Olympia a vast "Rainbow City" — a place of magical charm that should stimulate the spectator the moment its threshold is crossed.

The vivid colours of a huge rainbow, forming the most spectacular grouping of "neon" lighting ever attempted, will at once arrest the gaze, and the eye will travel back over a hall dappled with radiant hues, to the symbolic Sun of Prosperity.

Grouped around a fountain of Lalique glass in the centre of "Rainbow City," and flanked by long terraced boulevards reminiscent of the piled decks of luxury liners, will be found the picked products of scores of firms foremost in the provision of distinctive furnishings and services for the home—a group of exhibits illustrating in a most impressive way the renewed enterprise of manufacturers.

**At the End of the Lane.**

Adjacent to "Rainbow City," at the end of a realistic "country lane," is a village of ideal homes which brings within compass of a brief tour all that is most progressive in English domestic architecture. Here will be found ten houses and bungalows of varied design, erected by building firms of repute. Each will be completely furnished in excellent taste, answering at once the difficult question "How will it look?" that confronts many people when inspecting vacant properties.

Now that houses are not only more elaborately equipped but far cheaper than they have been for many years past, and building society facilities for their purchase are available at reduced rates of interest, the village will undoubtedly help to decide many visitors that—to paraphrase the words of the old Spanish proverb, the fire on one's own hearth is vastly preferable to the smoke of another's.

(*Continued on page 24*)

# How would you answer these questions?

**Can you say for certain how long you will live?**

**Are you likely to save money for investment as regularly as you would pay an insurance premium?**

**Is there any investment, other than life assurance, which enables you to save income tax?**

**What will be your income when you retire?**

**Can you think of any form of investment which will provide on retirement an income which is absolutely guaranteed?**

**Answer these questions for yourself and then make provision for an income on retirement of, say,**

**£100, £200**

**OR**

**£300 a year**

**and at the same time protect your dependants in the event of earlier death.**

*ANY AGE*
*ANY TERM*
*ANY AMOUNT*

**FILL IN AND FORWARD THIS COUPON**

**To THE PRUDENTIAL ASSURANCE CO. LTD**
Holborn Bars, London, E.C.1

Please send me particulars of your *Guaranteed Income Policy* which will secure me £ _____ a year for life at age _____ or provision for my dependants in the event of earlier death. My age next birthday is _____

NAME _____
(Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

ADDRESS _____

S 933. P.P 246

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

### The Perfect Hostess.

The eminently practical value of this Exhibition to the home-lover will be discovered in various other directions. If the queen of an ideal home is ambitious to be hailed as a perfect hostess the great secret of such popularity is to be found here. "Ideal Dinner Parties," a brilliant series of rooms on one of the terraced boulevards of "Rainbow City" will reveal all that a clever wife wants to know. Each room will disclose a setting for which the furniture, decorations, table appointments, and *menu* have been personally selected by a leading society hostess.

### Commonsense Kitchens.

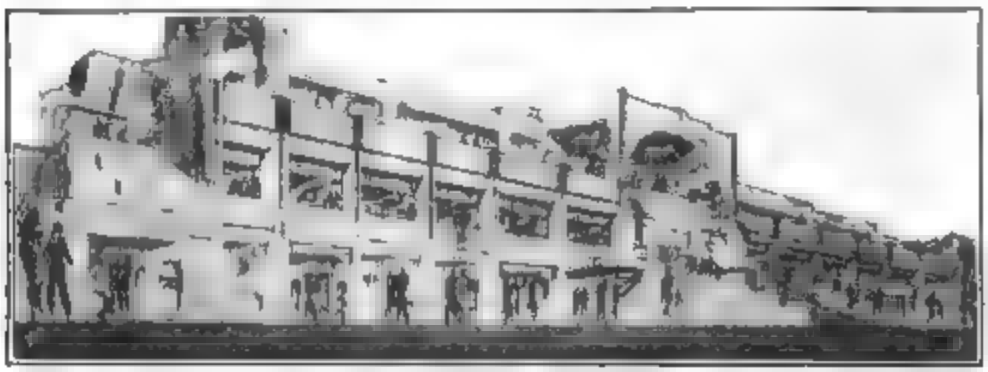
In five "Commonsense Kitchens," each fully equipped, Mrs. Darcy Braddell, the well-known home-planning specialist, will expose the fallacy of the cramped kitchen that, though an efficient workshop, becomes tiresome and tiring in use. She recognizes that the kitchen, as the most continuously-occupied room in the home demands sympathetic treatment that will leave a pleasant feeling of space and elbow-room.

### Fashion and Beauty.

The Empire Hall at Olympia will be found rich in interest for every member of the family. In the "Fashions and Fabrics" section, on the ground floor there will be a Fashion Theatre which breaks away in a surprisingly new and refreshing manner from all conventional ideas and formal staging. This new marvel, ingeniously equipped with spectacular lighting effects, will permit an entirely original technique in the presentation of mannequin displays. Audiences of eight hundred will be able to view four times daily, in complete comfort, a brilliant pageant of models by exclusive designers well worthy of the new distinction London has won in the world of fashion. Round the Theatre will be a "Realm of Beauty" with a thousand and one exhibits intended to captivate the feminine fancy.

### Gardens from Great Plays.

A "Peter Pan" garden in which Wendy and all the other favourite characters in Sir James Barrie's play appear will be a feature of the "Gardens from Great Plays" which form the crowning glory of the Ideal Home Exhibition. Part of the Exmoor scene of Blackmore's romance may be seen in a "Lorna Doone" garden, and plays by Arnold Bennett, Alfred Sutro, Bernard Shaw, Granville Barker, and other distinguished authors provide settings for pleasances that will delight every garden-lover.



*An artist's conception of one of the terraced boulevards of which will be a striking feature of this year's Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia.*

Never has the Ideal Home Exhibition been more complete or varied than it will be this year, and never have opportunities for home-makers been available at such favourable prices. There are unrivalled displays of furnishing and decoration, beautiful lighting schemes, the most modern sanitation, heating, and refrigeration methods, general house equipment and ingenious labour-saving devices—everything, indeed, for home service, comfort, and recreation. The Exhibition will yield hours of enjoyment and never-ending surprises for the visitor in every one of its richly equipped halls.

To the weary the gardens will prove a haven of rest but in addition a delightful Rest Lounge, to seat seven hundred people, will be found on the top floor of the Empire Hall, where the enchanting strains of Alfredo's Gypsy Orchestra will tempt many to linger. The Exhibition will remain open until April 29th, and I hope that all my readers will make a point of visiting it.

*(Continued on page 26.)*

# CHILDREN'S LAXATIVE

When a laxative has to be administered to infants and children the greatest care should be exercised. Delicate constitutions find their surest safeguard in

# DINNEFORD'S PURE FLUID MAGNESIA

Prevents the food of infants from turning sour during digestion. Pleasant to take—being fluid it does not form hard, insoluble lumps in the system and is undoubtedly the finest form in which to take magnesia. Recommended by doctors for over 100 years.

1/3 & 2/6 per bottle.

BRITISH MADE. BRITISH OWNED.


# HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

(Answers at foot of this article)

(1) What is the best relief for chilblains—instantly stopping the pain and irritation?

(2) What will stop a cold in the head like magic?

(3) What is the discovery (an odourless fluid) so valuable to mankind that a doctor has said that it should be laid on in every house like the hot and cold water?

(4) What is the product which is recommended by hospitals to their patients for their throats, teeth, and skin troubles?

(5) What will banish the odour of stale tobacco smoke from a room?

(6) What has 149 other uses besides those mentioned above?

The above General Knowledge tests were suggested by reading a little book which has lately been printed—over 7 million copies have already been distributed—for the instruction of the public. Varied though the questions are the correct answer in each case is the same Milton!

It really is astounding! And the book will fascinate you—just as Milton will in the way it never fails to do what the book says. There's a free copy packed with every bottle of Milton. And Milton costs sixpence.


# THIS NEW PEN:

## CAN'T LEAK

"Automatic safety" valve absolutely prevents leakage in any position and also guarantees instant writing.

## SHOWS LEVEL OF INK

A clean, transparent and incorrodable reservoir takes the place of the usual perishable rubber sac.

Showing the sleeve, the transparent reservoir full of ink and the cap.

## HOLDS 3 TIMES AS MUCH INK

**GUARANTEE** Try this pen for 30 days. If not completely satisfied send it back to T. B. Ford Ltd., and your money will be refunded in full without quibble. Ford's Pen is fully guaranteed for 10 years.

**30/-** Also in other sizes: 25/- and 42/-. And in Gold and Silver.

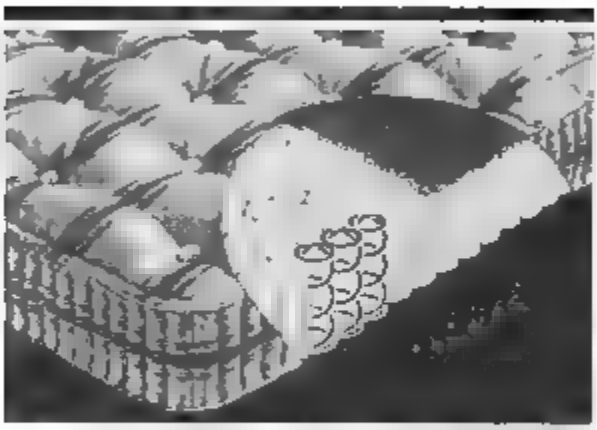
## MADE IN ENGLAND

Ford's Pen is obtainable from most stationers, stores and all W. H. Smith & Son's branches, and Boots Stationery Departments. In case of difficulty write to T. B. Ford Ltd., Pen Service Depot, 72, Piccadilly, London, W.1 Telephone Regent 1821 and 1822

# FORD ALL BRITISH PEN

MADE BY FORD'S OF GOLD MEDAL BLOTTING FAME.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.
*(Continued.)*



*This picture shows the "pocketed spring" construction of a luxury mattress.*

**The Ideal Mattress.**

If you possess a sagging, creaky, old-style mattress, dear reader, take my advice and get rid of it. Buy, in its place, a modern mattress of a special make, I shall be glad to give you the name. This is shown in the accompanying picture, and is built of hundreds of finely-tempered steel springs, each contained in its own pocket, so that it cannot interfere with the others, and all held securely in position by finest-quality upholstery. The edges are likewise of pocketed construction, so that they cannot break down, and the whole mattress is scientifically ventilated. It can be used on a box, chain spring or wire mattress and is the last word in real bed-luxury.

**Treatment for Varicose Veins.**

This is no place, of course, for the discussion of medical matters, and in any case, I do not profess to be an authority, but I should like to mention that I have heard of some remarkable cures due to a new method of treatment in connexion with varicose veins, swollen legs, and the innumerable other troubles due to relaxed conditions. This treatment is based on the theory that sufferers lack certain vital blood-constituents, and these are supplied by means of tiny tablets dissolved on the tongue, thus enabling Nature to restore the broken-down and devitalized fabric of veins and arteries and so re-establish normal circulation. The proprietors issue a free booklet describing the methods employed, together with numerous testimonials. The treatment, apparently, is quite pleasant and inexpensive, and does not entail any alteration in one's habits.

**Sweets to Remember.**

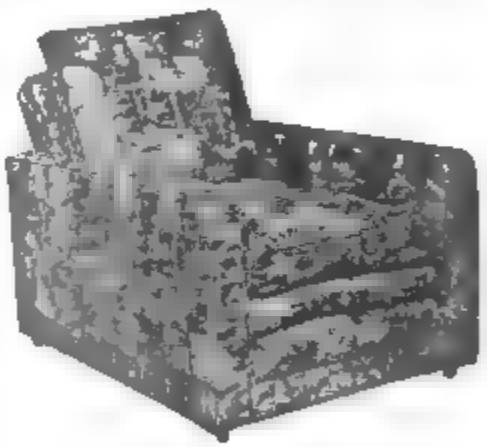
Most of us like good sweets, and if you happen to be partial to peppermints—the real, old-fashioned flavour, absolutely pure, looking like crystal and melting lusciously in the mouth—let me tell you the name of a make I have in mind. They cost only 6d. a quarter-pound, and will be a revelation to you if you haven't yet come across them.

**"Three Good Things."**

If you want to clean your windows, mirrors, and tiles quickly and well, without water and endless rubbing, yet achieving a brilliant shine, let me recommend you to an economical preparation (quite free from powder) that costs only 1s. and 1s. 9d. a tin. Another tip concerns a quick-drying heat-resisting black for your grates and stoves; it dries out like the finest enamel, and costs 1s. a tin with brush. Finally, if you want to finish with the bother of polishing taps, give them a coat of a special white porcelain (equally good for baths) that is sold at 1s. 3d. and upwards. These are the "three good things" I mentioned some time ago—and they *are* good.

**Lifetime Comfort.**

Here is a picture of what may well be called the "last word" in easy-chair comfort. It is built to last a lifetime, the frame being of hardwood, and the upholstery stuffed with pure hair. Moreover, it takes apart into three easily-managed sections—frame, seat, and back—for cleaning or the fitting of loose covers. The sheer luxury of reclining in this chair needs to be experienced to be properly appreciated; the sprung back and double-sprung seat give delightfully to one's weight and are fitted



*A super-comfortable lounge chair in modern style.*

*(Continued on page 28.)*

# Daily Mail
# IDEAL HOME EXHIBITION
## Olympia·London·W

•

**MARCH 29 TO APRIL 29**
**10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Daily**

•

**ADMISSION 2/4 [Inc. Tax]**
**After 6 p.m. 1/2 [Inc. Tax]**

•

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

with patent pocketed featherdown cushions that make one feel as though cradled on air. These beautiful chairs—covered to your taste—are priced according to length of seat, commencing at £5 19s. 6d.—a surprisingly low figure for such an exclusive article.

### Tobacco-Smoke and Your Teeth.

Women who find that their usual tooth-paste doesn't seem to remove tobacco-stains very efficiently should try a certain powder dentifrice that I shall be glad to recommend. It doesn't scratch the enamel, but is nevertheless extremely effective for whitening the teeth; moreover, it leaves the mouth feeling cool and sweet. This costs 3d., 7½d., and 1s., and the makers offer a free sample on request.

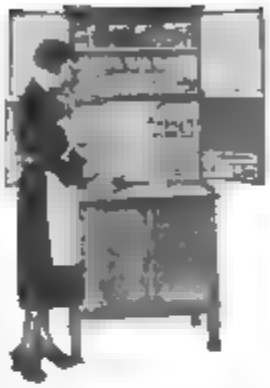
### Modern Fireplaces.

Now that the need for fires is happily diminishing one can begin considering improvements and alterations in fireplaces. The modern trend in decoration and furnishings tends to make the old fireplaces, with their massive, dust-collecting projections, look decidedly out of date. What is wanted is something that gains beauty from its sheer simplicity of line and "rightness" of proportion—something, moreover, that can be kept clean with a minimum of effort and forms a fitting frame for a grate which is likewise trouble-free and thoroughly efficient as a diffuser of heat. I am illustrating here a charming modern fireplace which exactly fulfils these requirements. This is only one of many, in a wide variety of styles, shown in the catalogue issued by a well-known firm of manufacturers. Prices are surprisingly moderate and the fires themselves are famous for their economy.

*This furniture and surround are designed for efficiency combined with beauty.*

### Saving Work in the Kitchen.

A place for everything, and everything in its place," is a most admirable sentiment, but it takes a lot of realizing in some kitchens. I am illustrating here a handsome cabinet which brings this ideal a great deal closer. Wouldn't you like one in *your* kitchen? All the things one needs are ready to hand, yet out of harm's way, and contained in a minimum of space. This cleverly-designed cabinet comprises an extending porcelain-topped table, glass food-jars with screw lids, spice jars, flour-bin and sifter, linen and cutlery drawers, a metal bread-drawer, etc. The price? Only £6 15s. 0d. cash, or £1 down and 10s. a month thereafter. Think it over; a cabinet of this kind would enable you to get through your work ever so much more quickly.



*An ideal kitchen cabinet.*

### Beautiful Floors.

I am always receiving letters from women who are anxious to get the best results on parquet, lino, and stained floors with a minimum of labour. The old methods are too slow and back-breaking for the modern housewife; she seeks reliable "short cuts." The quickest way of securing a beautiful, hard-wearing surface on polished floors is to invest in a clever little device which I have already referred to in these pages. This resembles a carpet-sweeper in appearance, and is used similarly, but has two separate functions. First of all, by means of an ingenious contrivance, it spreads a thin film of special wax *evenly* over the floor or lino; all you have to do is to push it to and fro. Once the floor is waxed, polishing is a very simple matter; a special pad is provided on which you place the machine and proceed to polish, without the slightest effort or strain. A brilliant, mirror-like gloss is speedily achieved, and you will find that this *lasts*, lengthening the life of your floor surfaces. Complete with all accessories, this excellent device costs only 30s., and is well worth its price.

*Continued on page 30.)*

*Young Susan's mother is as proud as Punch*

**BECAUSE SUE IS BATHED IN FRESH, JOYOUS HEALTH!**

THERE'S a lot of illness about these days and, as mothers know, illness and dirt are partners. Careless habits may begin in the home but they often end in serious trouble. That's why Susan's mother keeps Wright's Coal Tar Soap in the bathroom. For years Wright's has been a favourite with both nurses and mothers. And now, from replies received by the independent National Institute of Industrial Psychology to letters sent to thousands of doctors, it appears that Wright's is used more often by the medical profession than any other brand of toilet soap. Convincing proof of its genuine merit! Why not give your youngsters the protection of Wright's, a fine, safe soap free from cheap scents, injurious colouring matter and all irritants.

**WRIGHT'S** *coal tar* **SOAP**

FOR FRESHNESS AND RADIANT HEALTH

**PERFECT PROTECTION AGAINST COLDS & CHILLS**

Prevention is better than cure. And now there is a way to prevent colds, chills, chesties . . . [illegible] . . . Kozeni Patent 330777 . . . PURE WOOL SPUN MONEY . . . [illegible] . . . FOR MEN WOMEN & CHILDREN

**WHY REMAIN GREY?**

Should you be troubled with white, grey, greying, faded, or otherwise discoloured hair, you should write to-day to the Facktative Co. (Suite 52), 66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, for a free copy of their Boudoir Booklet, describing how to cure grey or faded hair without the use of dyes or stains.

**"LOXIT" The Modern STAIR CARPET HOLDER**

**RHINO-SOLE SYNTHETIC PLASTIC LEATHER** *Just spread it on—That's all!*

PRICE **1/6** per Tube Post Free

Rhino-Sole repairs with Rhino-Sole is similar [illegible] a plastic compound easily spread on with a knife. It can be moulded to any desired shape or thickness and hardens [illegible] . . . Rhino-Sole prepares [illegible] as well as leather footwear and is ideal for worn inside shoes, gym shoes, [illegible] . . .

**RHINO-SOLE, Ltd.,** 173K, Fleet St., London, E.C.4.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

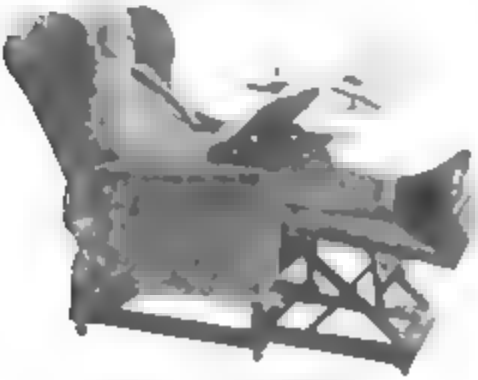
*Continued*

### For Your Stair-Carpet.

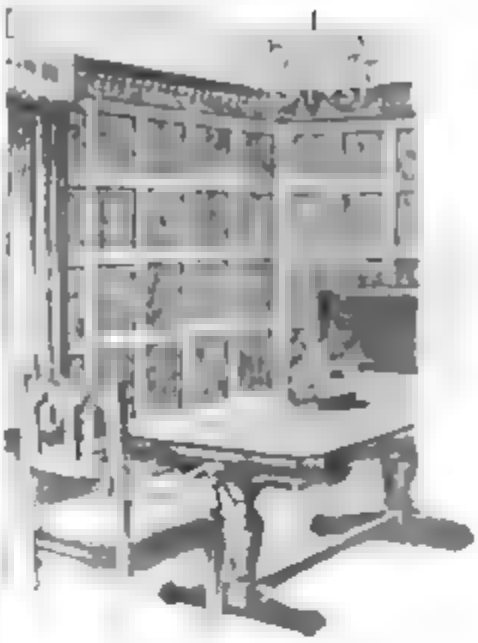
Stair-rods, most housewives are beginning to realize, have become out-of-date they are clumsy affairs at best and merely make work It is far better to scrap them and fix modern stair-carpet holders, which serve exactly the same purpose with a minimum of trouble. I have recently been looking at a very simple and effective holder of this kind, which not only grips the carpet firmly but is adjustable to any thickness. A pair, complete with eyes and screws, costs only 1s. 2d and can be fixed in a jiffy The holders are made in a handsome copper oxydized finish, and *never require cleaning* Once in place they look very attractive, and are readily removable when you want to take the carpet up

### A Boon for Invalids.

Here is a picture of an adjustable reclining chair which will interest invalids and others desirous of obtaining the acme of comfort It is not only luxurious, but is a very handsome piece of furniture, giving little external evidence of the ingenious mechanical means by which the various changes of position are effected. Mere pressure on a button while you are actually sitting in the chair, adjusts the back to any required angle from that of an easy chair to a full-length couch. The sides can also be opened outwards and turned back for easy access or exit, and every change can be manipulated by the occupant without assistance, and without leaving the seat The leg-rest is likewise adjustable and when not in use slides under the seat. The upholstery is of the very best quality, with soft elastic edges that readily conform to every contour of the body, and the whole thing is built to give perfect service for many years This chair is the patented product of a London firm which has specialized in invalid furniture for over half a century and can be confidently recommended



*A touch on a button adjusts this chair to any desired angle*



*Sometimes seen in handsome panelling*

### A New Idea in Panelling.

Industry is always springing some new surprise on us, and the picture reproduced above shows one of its latest efforts The rich-looking panelling is actually made of oak-grained asbestos-cement, but is well-nigh indistinguishable from the actual wood It is supplied in complete panelled form lasts for ever, and costs only a fraction the price of oak. This material is fire-resisting quite unaffected by damp, and makes the ideal wall-covering. It is very easy to fix being sent out in prepared sections, and can be quickly installed without creating general confusion. If you have coquetted with the idea of panelling a hall or room but have hesitated on the score of expense and bother, you should certainly investigate this clever product.

### How to Hang Curtains.

Most of the wear and tear in connection with curtains is caused by faulty methods of hanging, resulting in strain and difficulty in opening or closing them and also upsetting the hang All these troubles can be done away with if you fix a properly designed curtain rail and runners. These glide at a touch, even round curves, without jerking or jamming and the rail can be easily bent by hand to fit the most awkward-shaped window Once fixed—quite a simple job—it lasts a lifetime. Just at present the makers are offering sample lengths at half price, and I shall be glad to give you their name

(*Continued on page 32*

"Oh what a lovely polish"!

# MANSION POLISH

"Mansion" the quick, easy and economical floor polish, gives a mirror-like brilliance to Stained or Parquet Floors and Linoleum

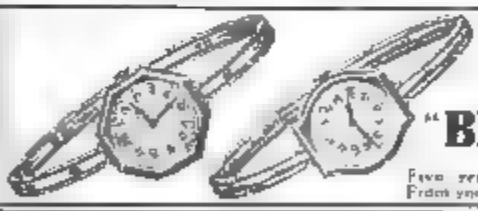
FOR DARK WOODS USE DARK MANSION

In Tins, 6d., 10½d. and 1/9. Also Large Household Tin, 3 containing 2-lbs. nett

HEADACHE! Here is THE Remedy —

# GENASPRIN

THE *SAFE* BRAND OF ASPIRIN



To enhance the APPEARANCE and QUALITY of any good Wrist Watch wear it with a "BRITANNIC" Bracelet

Five years maintenance and renewal of springs free From your Jeweller complete with Watches from £5-0-0

WHY MAKE TROUBLE OF OPENING TINS?

CAMP'S "P.C." TIN-OPENER cuts out danger and trouble and opens any tin in a simple safe manner. New in principle—unique piercing—no metal filings—used rust like scissors.

PRICE 1/6 (All Stainless 4/6) Spare Stainless Blades, 3d.

To ironmongers etc. or from CAMP & Co., 46, Oxford Rd., Acock's Green, BIRM.

Windowpics [illegible] Paper [illegible] Quick [illegible] White Porcelain [illegible]

P. Mules & Co. Ltd. Woodford Londn.

# MARIE ELISABETH

DELICIOUS

REAL SARDINES

DELICIOUS FOR ALL MEALS. HIGH FOOD VALUE. EVERY GROCER HAS THEM.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

*A new refrigerator that works by electricity, chemicals or ice.*

### A Novel Home Refrigerator.

When the hot weather comes along you will be wishing you had a refrigerator, thousands of housewives in the tropics are wishing the same at this very moment! Let me tell you about a little invention that appears to fulfil one's dreams—a portable refrigerator that will keep food or drinks absolutely cold and fresh in the hottest climate without electricity, gas, chemicals, or ice! The device makes use of a well-known principle—the production of a very low temperature by means of evaporation. All you have to do is to pour a pint or so of water into the box in the morning, its evaporation through special absorbent tiles keeps the contents stone cold. Indeed, the warmer the air outside, the colder the interior of the refrigerator, because evaporation is quicker. There are models in various sizes and finishes from 25s. up to 99s. 6d., and it should be emphasised that there are no moving parts, no upkeep costs, and nothing whatever to go wrong. The only thing required is the daily charge of water.

### Do You Like Cream?

Here is a novelty that should appeal to housewives everywhere—a product indistinguishable from fresh dairy cream, and just as delicious, at half the price. It can be used for every purpose that cream is used for, whips excellently, and keeps considerably longer. This new specialty is prepared from best quality "Grade A" milk, blended with other nutritious ingredients, and is entirely free from preservatives. It *looks* like fresh cream, *tastes* like it, and contains a high percentage of vitamins, so that it is particularly good for kiddies and invalids. It is strongly recommended by doctors, and has been awarded the certificate of the Institute of Hygiene and the Diploma of Merit of the Universal Cookery and Food Association. As to prices, it is sold in 4-oz. hygienic cartons at 4d., 6-oz. 6d., 8-oz. 8d., and in pints at 1s. 6d. You will find it ideal with tea, coffee, puddings, fruit, ice-cream or cereals, and I strongly advise a trial.

### Hair Troubles.

It is not too much to say that a woman—or a man, for the matter of that!—looks as old as her hair, for nothing adds to one's apparent age so convincingly as scanty lifeless locks, often prematurely streaked with grey. I have lately been reading a very interesting little booklet issued by a specialist in hair troubles, wherein he advances some novel theories and gives particulars of a treatment which certainly seems to have worked wonders in many cases. "All ordinary diseases of the scalp and hair are curable," he claims, and I commend his pamphlet to readers who are dissatisfied with the state of their hair.

### Quick Repairs.

Here's something that you should keep in the house—a tube of "synthetic leather" with which you can easily repair cracks and holes in boots and shoes. It works in the same way as putty, you merely spread it with a knife to the desired shape and thickness, and within a few hours it hardens and wears like real leather. This preparation is equally useful for mending gum-boots, worn tennis shoes, and lots of other jobs. A large tube costs 1s. 6d. post free.

### Tin-Opening Without Tears.

The ordinary old-fashioned tin-opener is a thing of terror to most of us; every time one uses it one risks a bad gash. If you would like to get rid of this menace once and for all, buy a new make, costing only 1s. 6d., which will enable you to open any kind of tin with ease and confidence. It works just like a pair of scissors, cuts the top off neatly and cleanly, and is absolutely *safe*.

*This new tin-opener works just like a pair of scissors, and is absolutely safe.*

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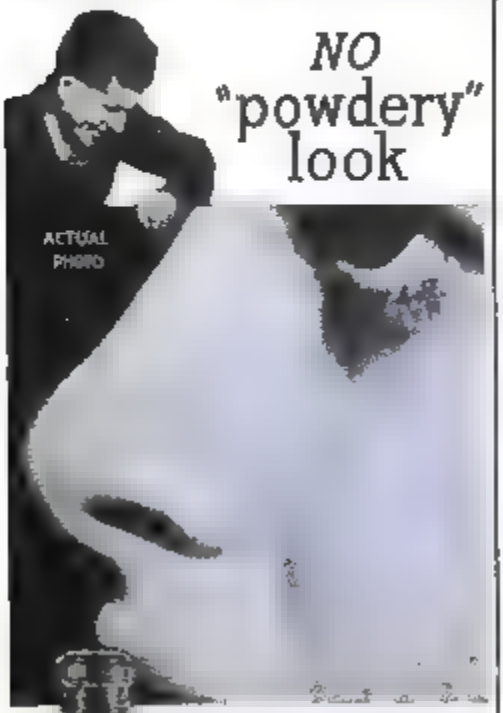

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# THE DANGERS OF SPRING

## HINTS FOR PARENTS AND LOVERS OF CHILDREN

EVERY season of the year brings its own health problems, but for children the spring is perhaps the most trying of all. In the winter there is a scarcity of health-giving sunshine, which reduces the general vitality to a low ebb. The power of resistance to the attacks of germs is lowered, leaving the youngsters more prone to contract infections such as colds, bronchitis, rheumatic fever, whooping cough, and so on.

**How to Prevent Infection.**

In a perfectly healthy child catarrhal diseases are unusual, but under modern social conditions few kiddies can boast of this ideal state.

Recurring colds can be traced, in many cases, to some local trouble which calls for correction before relief can be obtained. A very common cause is deformity of the nasal septum—the partition inside the nose—which prevents proper breathing and drainage. Adenoids and septic tonsils should also be looked for, while such conditions as rheumatism, constipation and anæmia are all predisposing factors, and must receive proper medical attention.

**The Value of Fresh Air.**

When no local cause is present the hygiene of everyday life is generally at fault. Many mothers, with a mistaken idea of kindness, consider their children to be too delicate to be exposed to fresh air. The doleful result is overheated and underventilated rooms, hot-water bottles in bed, thick flannel night-garments, and too heavy bed-clothes. In the daytime these poor kiddies are often condemned to wear thick flannel or woollen underclothing, heavy scarves, gloves, etc., which give protection to parts that need it least.

The excellent results obtained in Switzerland by the open-air treatment of delicate school-children have definitely proved the mistake of over-coddling. Youngsters debilitated by catarrh, confined city life, or by diseases such as measles, whooping cough, rheumatic fever, etc., have enormously benefited from this seemingly Spartan *régime*, wherein the children are inured to play games in the open-air among the snow, [illegible] in different countries run on similar lines demonstrate conclusively that open-air life has a profound effect in preventing disease and making the child strong and healthy.

**Sunlight and Vitamins.**

Modern medical research has revealed that a shortage of Vitamin D in the food is a prolific cause of the so-called "deficiency diseases." It has also been shown that sunlight, acting on the fat in the skin, actually manufactures this vitamin in the body tissues, and thus makes good the deficiency in the blood-supply. Under ordinary modern conditions, however, the health-giving rays of the sun are not allowed to exert their beneficial effect. The reinforcement of the supply of Vitamin D during the spring, therefore, is a matter of considerable importance to the well-being of the growing child. This can be ensured by seeing that the diet contains a sufficiency. Cod-liver oil is one of the richest natural sources of this vitamin, and its routine administration in winter and spring is of the greatest service in increasing the body's resistance. This oil also contains another important essential to healthy development with a definite power of protecting against infection—Vitamin "A."

To sum up, a child should not be treated as a hot-house plant, but, suitably clothed, should be allowed plenty of healthy exercise in the open air and plenty of fresh air in the bedroom or play-room. As to the texture of the clothes for everyday wear, the outer garments should consist of wind-proof material, while the under-garments should be made of some warm cellular fabric which readily absorbs and carries off the perspiration. The diet should contain an abundance of milk, butter, eggs, fresh green vegetables, and fruit. The ordinary, every-day dietary is generally poor, lacking in calcium (lime) salts, which are of supreme importance in the formation of sound bone and teeth and for the proper constitution of the blood, but this can be made good with milk or an occasional course of certain tablets which afford an excellent method of administering calcium.

**Convalescence after Illness.**

While the treatment of measles, whooping cough, and other diseases, lies in the hands of the physician, the after-care is usually left to the parents. Proper conduct of the convalescent period is of the utmost importance. The child should have a course of cod-liver oil and malt, and also a good tonic. The rules as to fresh air should be carefully observed, and plenty of rest must be insisted upon.

During the spring months rashes and other skin affections are common among kiddies. These are merely further manifestations of lowered resistance, and sufferers will benefit if in all cases of the hints already mentioned are followed.

# THE STRAND MAGAZINE

## Contents for May, 1933

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Frontispiece For Crystal the breaking-point had come She shook her head and sought for words. "Since we came here," she said, "I've felt—that perhaps you were feeling it was all a mistake. Our being engaged, I mean."


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| THE BRAVE MEN<br>Illustrations by Forster | MARGARET KENNEDY .. | 451 |
| THE DETECTION CLUB<br>Illustrations from Drawings and a Photograph | G. K. CHESTERTON | 462 |
| THE JOYOUS JOURNEY OF GYPSY AND JUNE<br>Illustrations by Stanley Davis | GILBERT FRANKAU | 469 |
| THREE GENERATIONS<br>Illustrations by Elizabeth Earnshaw | W. B. MAXWELL | 480 |
| ACROSTICS | | 491 |
| THE MAN WITH SAMPLES<br>Illustrations by Jack M. Faulks | "SAPPER" | 492 |
| THE SEA AGAIN<br>Illustrations by Frank Oldham | DENIS MACKAIL .. .. | 503 |
| MY BEST NATURE PHOTOGRAPH<br>With Special Illustrations in Photogravure | | 512 |
| INCORRIGIBLE CORINNE<br>Illustrations by J. Morton Sale | ROLAND PERTWEE | 522 |
| THE CORAL BOX<br>Illustrations by Edward Osmond | H. DE VERE STACPOOLE | 534 |
| SIGNS OF THE TIMES<br>Illustrations from Photographs and Drawings | BERNARD DARWIN | 543 |
| MINNIE THE MONK<br>Illustrations by Eric Fraser | W. TOWNEND | 549 |
| ENCOURAGING BIDS IN CONTRACT | COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE | 558 |
| PERPLEXITIES | | 560 |


**The characters and names in the stories in "The Strand Magazine" are entirely imaginary and have no reference to real persons.**


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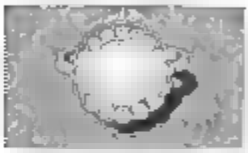

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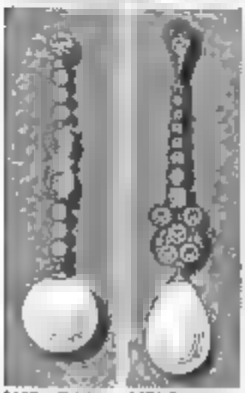

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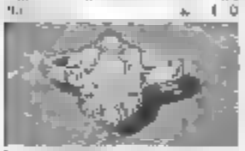

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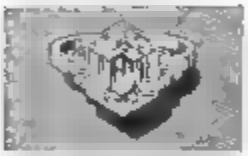

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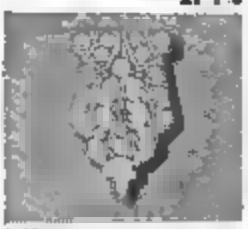

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# STRAND MAGAZINE

*May,*
1933

*For Crystal the breaking-point had come. She shook her head and sought for words. "Since we came here," she said, "I've felt—that perhaps you were feeling it's all a mistake. Our being engaged, I mean."*

# THE BRAVE MEN

By

## MARGARET KENNEDY

As Fate would have it, Freddy's letter arrived by the last post on Saturday. And, since there was no mail out from St. Merryn's on a Sunday, Magda had thirty-six hours in which to think it all over. She had time to be furious, to resign herself, to recover her spirits and to make a plan. By Monday morning she was quite ready for the battle. She tore up the two letters which she had written on Saturday night and Sunday afternoon, and sat down to compose a third.

The first of these replies had been very long and very angry. It accused Freddy of perjury, cruelty, and inconstancy. Never, never, never would she forgive him. After ten years, after a thousand tender protestations, after beseeching her to elope with him at least a dozen times, how dared he tell her that he loved anyone else? How could she help it if she had made him miserable? She had been miserable herself. Her marriage had been a failure from the very beginning. Roddy didn't understand her. The children tied her hand and foot. Belief in Freddy, the comfort of knowing that he would always love her, had been the only thing worth living for. And now he was going to desert her. But men were all alike.

A couple of aspirins and a good night's rest must have had a soothing effect, for Sunday's letter was in a milder vein. It was very short and very sad. She quite understood. It was inevitable, perhaps, and she ought to have foreseen it. She was not going to reproach him, though naturally, the news had been a great shock to her. He had the right to be happy if he could. Their friendship had meant a great deal to her, but she had always known that, for him, it was not enough. He wanted a wife and a home of his own, and she could never give him that. She could never leave Roddy and the children or be more than his very loving friend. If he could not be contented with that, they had much better part. Hadn't she said as much often and often? They must forget one another if they could, and he must start life afresh with his young bride.

But acquiescence in the idea of Freddy with a young bride was not as easy as it sounded. Magda was a grasping woman. She hated parting with anything. All night she lay awake, trying to realize it. How could she possibly get on without him?

ILLUSTRATED BY FORSTER



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Who would fetch and carry for her? On whom could she rely when she was feeling upset? Freddy had been the mainstay of her life. If she wanted sympathy or amusement she could turn to him with absolute confidence. Wherever he was, a telegram would bring him at a moment's notice. He laughed at her jokes. He suffered agonies when she was ill. He assured her that she was beautiful even when she felt tired or off colour. For her sake he had remained a bachelor for ten years. She couldn't let him go.

It was unthinkable. He was her belonging. No upstart young female, no Crystal Jones, could be allowed to snatch him from her like this. She must fight for him. She must make a plan.

And so, next morning, she wrote her third letter.

Oh, my dear, my dear, I understand!

How could you ever doubt me? Your letter has made me very, very happy.

'Isn't this what I've always told you that you ought to do? Haven't I begged you, again and again, not to ruin your life for my sake? I've been so miserable, knowing that what you wanted could never be, and knowing that I must always make you suffer. But you wouldn't listen to me. And now that things have come right for you at last, I can only shed tears of thankfulness.

'But why do you tell me so little about her? Only that her name is Crystal Jones and that she had been staying with you and your mother at Bexhill. I want to know lots and lots more than that. I want to know *everything* about her. Something tells me that she is very young. Am I right? And a blonde, of course. And just a little conventional, perhaps, at first sight, or she wouldn't, I fancy, have been staying with your mother. But not a bit conventional inside, or you wouldn't have fallen in love with her. Please write at once and tell me all about the *real* Crystal, not the blonde Miss Jones whose engagement, I suppose, will be announced in the Press very shortly.

How pleased your mother will be. She has tried so hard to get you married, hasn't she, and hated me so terribly because she thought it was all my fault. But now, perhaps, she will forgive me. And how lucky that you decided to be a Good Son this year and go to her at Bexhill instead of coming to us! Just think if you had never met your Crystal!

My dearest love, Freddy, and tell Crystal that she's a very lucky girl. I only hope she realizes *how* lucky. When she has lived as long as I have, she will. But she does now, I expect. I'm sure she does.

'When am I going to see her? I can't possibly wait for very long. Listen! It's just occurred to me. Couldn't you bring her down to stay for a few days, so that she and I might have a chance to get to know one another? It would be delicious if you could, Freddy. *Please do!* We've nobody here just now, and you could both feel perfectly free to amuse yourselves in any way you like. Come right away. That is, of course, as long as it wouldn't bore Crystal.

IT was not until the very end of the journey that misgivings overtook the simple-minded Freddy. He had been so overwhelmed by Magda's generosity that he could think of nothing else. Never for one moment had he really expected her to understand like this. Of course they must both go and stay with her at once.

She's my very oldest friend, he told Crystal. And they have a beautiful house. You'll enjoy it.

Crystal had no objections to make. During the last few days she had met a lot of Freddy's friends and they had all been charming to her. Everybody seemed to be so pleased that he was going to get married. It was high time, they said, and a thousand pities that he had not done it long ago.

But I'm so glad he didn't, Crystal innocently told them, for then he wouldn't have married me.

Whereat they smiled mysteriously and told each other afterwards that the poor child evidently didn't know.

Perhaps she ought to have known. Little hints, dropped by his mother, should have told her. But she was a very straightforward young person, and the world as she knew it, was a simple place where black was black, and white was white, and where people meant what they said. She had not learnt to be cautious, or suspicious. And then, she had not seen the whole of Magda's letter. Freddy had only read out to her the passages which concerned herself, and these she thought were kind, if a bit gushing. So she set off on the highest spirits.

The journey to Cornwall was new and delightful, especially at the end, when the train ran in and out of tunnels beside a sea that was the colour of a peacock's tail. Crystal hung out of the window between each tunnel and exclaimed. That light-house across the bay, what was it called?

Rossdhu," said Freddy, heavily.

Have you ever been there?

Once.

He had travelled over this bit of line so often that he knew it by heart. He had bathed in that peacock sea, and climbed those cliffs, and once he had gone with Magda

to the lighthouse, in a sailing boat. That had been one of his most cherished memories. It had been such a golden day, and Magda had been, for once, quite happy. She had sat in the prow, singing snatches of an old Hebridean rowing song, as they sped across the bay. He had so few pictures of Magda laughing and gay, in the sunlight. When he thought of her it was always sadly, in the twilight, or lost in the shadows of her beautiful room where the heavy curtains made a darkness even at mid-day.

Now the train was rounding the last headland. He knew every tree and stone on the hillside, every wave that fell upon the beach below. With what suspense, with what ecstasy, had he taken this journey in other days! Now was the moment when he would be looking out to get his first glimpse of St. Merryn's cove and the steep little village which clung to the side of the cliff. How often had she sent for him, and how joyfully had he rushed to obey the summons! Every tree, every stone, every wave, was like a voice from the past. How would she be looking? Would she be melancholy or gay? Would she be kind? Would she listen to him? Was it possible that this time—*this* time——. But it was all over now. Those things which he had felt in other days must not be allowed to rise up and assail him now. It was terrible to discover that his heart had begun to beat a little faster.

He left off staring out of the window and turned to look at Crystal. He tried to remember that he was now free from his mournful enchantment. This joyous young creature had created a new world for him. For the past weeks he had been gloriously happy in her company. She was perfect.

But on this journey, she was a stranger. He had taken it too often alone. He was shut up with his own undying memories, and this girl had no part in it.

She was so incredibly young. His mother had spoken, a little doubtfully, of the difference in their ages, but he had never felt that it mattered before. He had been proud of her youth. She was still as brown as a berry after their holiday at Bexhill, and she had pulled off her hat, so that her yellow hair was all tossed about by the sea breezes which blew in at the window.

But the last time that he had come that way he had been possessed by the image of dark hair sleek as satin, a white forehead, a languid lilting voice. And now he was going back to her—he was going back, just as he had gone a hundred times before.

"I oughtn't to have come," he thought miserably. "I ought to have kept away."

It was too late now. The train was slowing down. They were in the station. The eager Crystal was already jumping out.

NOBODY at St. Merryn's, ever drives up from the station unless it is very wet. Freddy delivered their luggage to the carrier and led the way, up steep little cobbled streets and flights of steps winding between the houses which came tumbling down the cliff. For Magda's house, he explained, was at the very top, higher even than the church and market-place which crowned the hill. The walls of her garden, on the cliff's edge, above the market-place, like the bastions of some ancient castle. Crystal kept stopping and exclaiming and peeping down between the houses at the view of the harbour. She had never seen anything so enchanting in her life. And when he saw those towering walls with their trailing banners of valerian and clematis, her eyes nearly jumped out of her head with excitement.

"D'you mean to say she lives up there? What a gorgeous view she must have!"

Freddy agreed, but, as they climbed the last flight of steps, he remembered that the view was rather the reverse. Magda had built her house looking sideways, not over the harbour, and one could only see the sea from the upper bedrooms. She had said, anything typical, and said that the harbour and the lighthouse reminded her of a picture post-card. [illegible] but the garden wall of the cottage, that she owned herself.

"It's rather shut in," he said eagerly.

They had reached a small blue door in the wall. He pushed it open and they passed out of England, out of the quaint little fishing town into Magda's own exotic domain. It was as he had said, rather shut in. A fountain played in a small paved court, shaded by two plane trees. Crystal paused and stared.

"It looks foreign somehow," she said.

Inside the house it was quite dark. Also it smelt funny. Nice though, she decided, sniffing like incense. They passed through a great dim hall, and she felt that her shoes were making a great clatter upon the black and white marble of the floor. And then they were in a very long room, with windows all down one side of it, whence the sun, by some [illegible] was thrust back by heavy curtains. It was so dim in there that she shivered, and her eyes, still dazzled by the light outside, could not make anything out.

She advanced a few steps, peering uncertainly through the blue dusk. From a [illegible] by the fireplace a long snake-like figure was uncoiling itself, with a sudden dark head, small and smooth as satin. A languid lilting voice had asked:

"Is that Freddy and—and Crystal?"

The floor was so wonderfully polished that it was like a skating rink. Only the wary

could ever keep their feet on it. Freddy from long practice, had the knack, but Crystal was unprepared. Her country shoes shot away from under her She sat down with a bump

'My dear Crystal!' exclaimed Freddy, with more irritation than sympathy, as he helped her up.

Crystal was so much embarrassed that she could only stare and stammer Down the long room came Magda, murmuring reassurances. She didn't walk, she floated

Oh but how dreadful! This wicked floor! Freddy's used to it, of course, but he ought to have warned you

Crystal gazed up into a pair of enormous, mournful eyes, so black, and set in a face so haggard, that they seemed like two deep caverns. And she wondered uncomfortably if her nose wanted powdering

It didn't. And if it had it wouldn't have mattered She was young enough to carry off a shiny nose. Nor did she generally worry about such trifles But there was something about Magda which made one worry all the time, something which made one feel thick and clumsy She tip toed uneasily about the treacherous floors, perched on the chairs, which all seemed too low, and only felt safe at night when she was snugly in her bed

*Je*-mima!" she wondered then Whatever's happened to me?

Why did she seem to be all arms and legs? What was wrong with her clothes? And why, when she ventured to make a remark, was there so often a flat silence as if she had said something silly? After a couple of days she had grown so nervous that she scarcely dared to open her mouth

This sort of thing had never happened to her before. She felt quite miserable It was so ungrateful not to be enjoying herself more when Magda was so frightfully sweet to her. But there was something cold and queer about the house. She kept

*Crystal advanced a few steps, peering uncertainly through the blue dusk. From a divan by the fireplace a long snake-like figure was unwinding itself, a snake with a dark head, small, and smooth as satin.*

knocking into things in the dark, and her voice seemed too loud. Outside it was much better. She loved exploring the little town and the harbour, and Magda's children were adorable. In fact the nursery was the only room where she could feel [illegible]

Nora had a flat for [illegible] with Magda's handsome sardonic husband. He came in sometimes and ate his meals with them but most of his life seemed to be spent in his great studio on the other side of the town. He took her there once and showed her a seascape that he was painting, all in little spots which she thought very peculiar.

'I suppose it's awfully technical,' she ventured at last.

Whereat he smiled broadly and took her out to eat an ice at Ye Olde Harbour Café. Once or twice he looked at her in a funny way, as if he was just going to say something rather important. But he never did, except once, and then she couldn't understand him. He had found her in the hall, hovering miserably outside the blue room,

trying to make up her mind to go in. And he had whispered confidentially

Go on, child. Remember, you hold the ace of trumps. It'll get you there in the long run, you know.

'The ace of trumps,' questioned Crystal, doubtfully.

Sincerity and Roddy.

He had heard whistling off the hot studio. She wondered what on the world he could have meant. She would have asked Freddy only asking Freddy nowadays was not so easy as it once had been.

That was the worst thing of all. It was so dreadful that she tried for a long time to pretend that it hadn't happened. Something had come between Freddy and herself. A thin cold mist seemed to have clouded the warm sunshine of their happiness. And she could not, for the life of her, get away from the idea that it was somehow her fault. Freddy was annoyed with her for chattering about so much, and for saying such stupid things, and for making a bad impression on his friends. He was disappointed in her.

She wanted to tax him with it. But she was so unaccustomed to putting her feelings into words that she did not know however she could begin. She was so much afraid that he would think she was criticizing Magda, or suggesting that it was Magda's fault. And this it obviously wasn't. Magda was always perfectly sweet.

So Crystal held her peace and went bathing with the children, and climbed up to the coastguards' point, and called herself a juggins, and remembered that it would all come out in the wash, and everything would be the same in a hundred years' time, and worse things happen at sea, and other pieces of proverbial stoicism. Soon it would be over, and they would go away and forget about it all and be happy again. They would be married . . . but would they?

Were they really suited to one another? Hadn't she better—hadn't she better, perhaps, while there was still time, break it off? *Is* mama. What *had* happened to her?

And Magda, watching her with indulgent eyes, told Freddy how charming she was.

Crystal! How the name suits her! Like some clear little mountain stream. You know exactly everything she's thinking and feeling. An adorable child.

The word *child* seemed to be very much in the air. Freddy began to hate it. For Crystal did seem to be growing more childish every day. At Bexhill he had hardly noticed it. Naturally he had known that she was immature, but he had also known deep in his heart that her maturity would be worth waiting for. Her *naïveté* had never got on his nerves during those first days.

But then, the conversation in his mother's house was not very brilliant or complicated. Magda, when she chose to exert herself, was an inspired talker. She had a lazy and subtle wit, and her reading, though desultory, had been wide, so that she was able to tackle almost any subject that might come up. Just now she was in an extremely talkative mood. She would sit for hours, leaning her white elbows on the dinner table and cupping her chin in her hands, tossing ideas, like fantastic bubbles, into the air. All she asked of her guests was that they should keep those bubbles floating, that they should catch her moods of whimsical, frivolous speculation. Freddy had never known her in better form and he would have enjoyed himself immensely if it had not been for Crystal's stolidity and Crystal's blank incomprehension, and Crystal's devastating, blunt little sentences. Whenever Crystal spoke the bubble immediately burst. It was exasperating.

Did he really want to have to listen to those blunt little sentences for the rest of his life?

He could never have said exactly when it was that the truth came to be admitted between Magda and himself. He thought that it was somewhere about the fifth day, and he was sure that he had never meant to imply any disloyal criticism of Crystal. If put to it he could not even have been certain that they had mentioned her name. But he must have said something which implied that his engagement was a terrible mistake, for there was Magda steering the conversation away to more impersonal topics with a reproving air, as if to remind him that he had no right to hint at such things. He felt guilty and miserable, and at lunch he was quite openly impatient with Crystal.

She had talked more than usual, going on and on about the adventures of those St. Merryn's sailors who had been shipwrecked until everyone was bored. Any excitement which could have been got out of the topic had been exhausted a month ago when the loss of the *Fanny Briggs* had filled not only the Cornish but the London newspapers. There had been passengers aboard, and the ship's boats had not been large enough. The master and the mate were lost, but five men, who had volunteered to stay on the ship, were thought to have escaped in a small dinghy. For twelve days the world had been waiting for news of those men. The story of their rescue had been written in headlines from John o' Groats to the Cape. For they had been picked up at last, three living and two dead, somewhere south of the Azores.

NOW it was all over. The world had something else to think about. Only in St. Mervyn's they were not forgotten, for they had all been born in the crowded little streets down by the harbour. And they were coming home, the three that were left. Yesterday they had landed at Plymouth. They were expected by the afternoon train. The town had been decorated in their honour and the mayor was going to make a speech. Crystal and the children were tremendously excited.

Magda yawned. She hated provincial occasions.

But the archway over Fore Street persisted. Crystal: "You really ought to go and see it. It's wonderful! All made of geraniums, with WELCOME written on it in cornflowers. And to-night there'll be fireworks."

Magda yawned again and Freddy said irritably:

"Well, that's enough about that."

He spoke as one speaks to a tiresome child who is talking too much. There was a significant little pause, and Crystal flushed painfully. But Magda carried off the awkward moment by starting a discussion of decorations in general. Why was it, she asked, that the English always did these things so badly? She spoke of Pardons in Brittany, and Freddy chimed in with other examples of the picturesque, and somehow they got through the meal.

Later on, in the garden, he apologized to Crystal.

"I oughtn't to have spoken like that," he admitted.

But for Crystal the breaking-point had come. She shook her head and sought for words.

"I'm quite glad you did," she said at last. "It's sort of—sort of brought it into the open. Because you see, you've been feeling like that quite often."

"Oh no," protested Freddy.

"Oh yes. It's all—everything's quite different to what it was at first. We aren't happy like we used to be. I say things that annoy you."

"My dear child, don't talk nonsense."

"Isn't nonsense, Freddy. And it's frightfully important. I've been wanting to have it out with you for ever so long, only I didn't know how to say it. But since we came here I've felt that perhaps you were feeling it's all a mistake. Our being engaged, I mean."

"Don't be so unreasonable. If I can't ever speak sharply——"

"It's not what you say. It's what you don't say. You feel impatient. That's the point. I'm not brainy, like you——"

"Oh, lord!"

"What's the matter now?"

"Must you say brainy? It's an awful word."

"No. I don't have to. But if—if we were really suited it wouldn't get on your nerves like that. I mean you'd just laugh. You used to laugh at lots of things I said at Bexhill. I always knew that. But if we were really suited and got married, then you'd either just get naturally used to me saying things like brainy or I'd just naturally leave off saying them. We wouldn't do it on purpose, I mean, but we'd kind of—of slide into the same sort of language. But you can't slide into anything if you're feeling jumpy all the time, and that's what's happening to us now. We're making each other jumpy."

This was all so true that Freddy was silent. Crystal went on. She went on with the downright persistence of an inarticulate person who has at last found words. At last he realized that she was actually breaking off their engagement. She was pulling off his ring.

He protested forlornly. But he could not stop her, for hers was the stronger position. She had made up her mind, and he was so torn between relief and regret that he hardly knew what he wanted. And at last he found himself alone in the rose garden with a diamond ring in his hand.

"If only we hadn't come here," he thought, confusedly. "If only I hadn't seen Magda again."

A profound melancholy assailed him, and a sense of waste. This little episode, these three short weeks of happiness with Crystal, seemed to mark the end of his youth. He was too old to marry, or to start a new life. The days of adventure were over. He had got on well at the Bar, but he would never reach the front rank. He made a good income, but he would never be rich. He had nothing so very much in front of him now. He would grow older, a little balder every year, a little stouter, a little more sentimental, a little more fussy about his health, a little more set in his ways.

But he would still have Magda. He would still have the shelter of her dim, small world and his own frustrated love. That love would never come to anything very much, but very soon he would himself leave off wanting it to come to anything. They would have their little jokes, and their long silences, their regrets and their confidences. Magda, in her blue room—he fled to it now, his refuge from the boisterous, sunlit world of youth and adventure which had passed him by.

"Crystal has broken it off," he told her.

"Oh, Freddy!"

She was exquisitely sympathetic. And yet she wasn't terribly surprised.

I was a raid, you know Freddy From the first I was afraid

She's too young. I don't think I could have made her happy

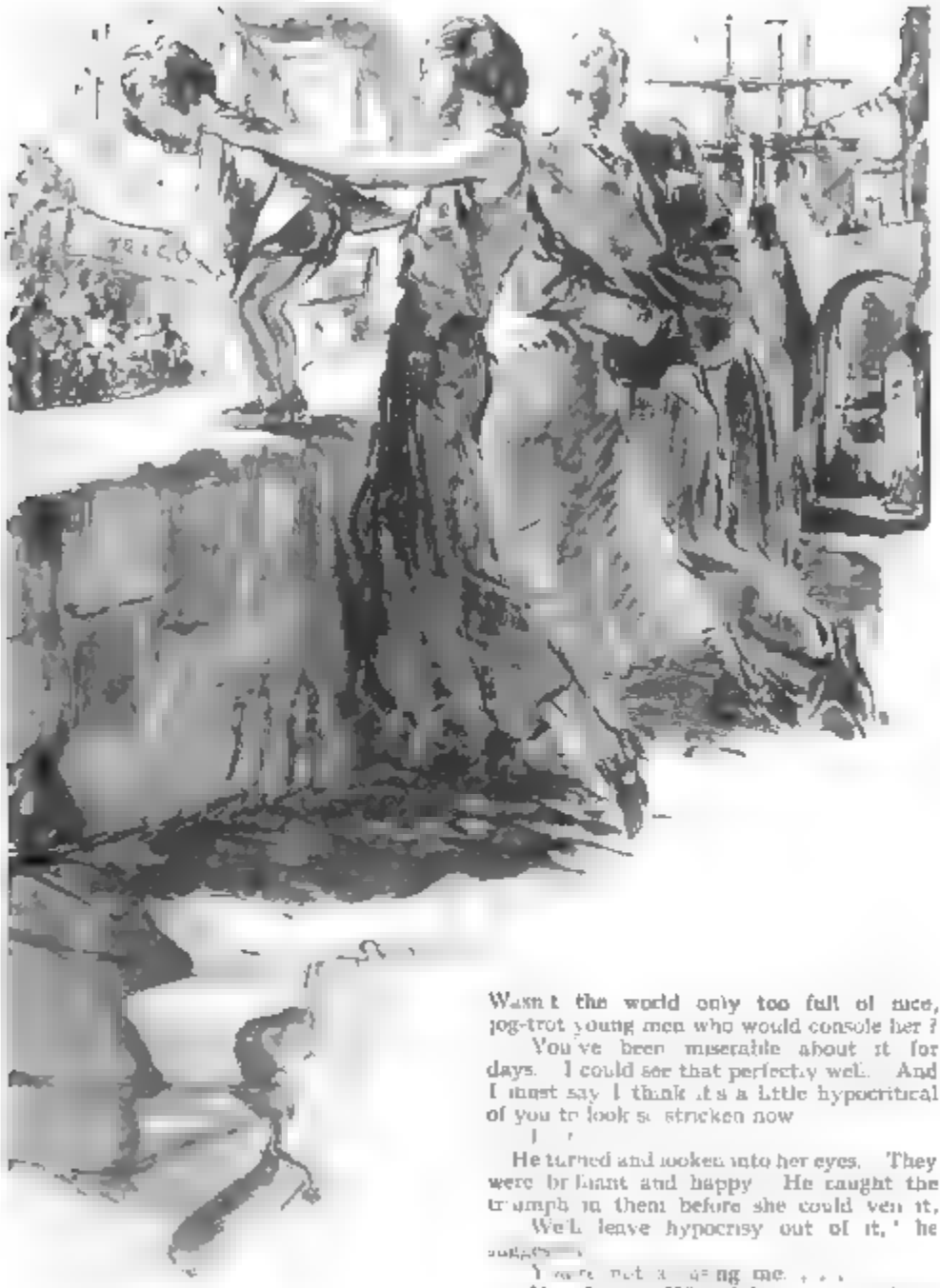
Ah Freddy if you d only let me choose for you!"

At my age, . .

At your age My dear Freddy what are you talking about? I've always thought you ought to marry a very young girl but not, I can confess it now not dear Little Crystal She s too positive You couldn t mould her

I fee like a cad he said, uncertainly

But why? How was it his fault? She strove to console him to make him feel that it was all for the best How lucky that they should have made up their minds so soon And what a lifetime of misery had they escaped. Crystal would get over it



*'Look at the brave men,' said Crystal. And she held the little boy up, high in the air, so that he might see them.*

Wasn't the world only too full of nice, jog-trot young men who would console her?

You've been miserable about it for days. I could see that perfectly well. And I must say I think it's a little hypocritical of you to look so stricken now

[illegible]

He turned and looked into her eyes. They were brilliant and happy. He caught the triumph in them before she could veil it.

'Well, leave hypocrisy out of it,' he suggested.

'You're not [illegible]ing me. . . .

Yes, I am. Why did you ever ask us here?'

She faced him, frank and smiling.

"To see if Crystal was the right girl for you.

'And if she wasn't?'

"To send her about her business."

"Magda!"

Are you going to forgive me?

"I don't know. I oughtn't to."

You forget," she told him, softly, "that I love you. I'd do more than that where your happiness is at stake.

Magda. . .

She allowed him to take her in his arms, and, as they kissed, a deep, contented sigh escaped her. It had been a dangerous moment, but it was past. She leant her smooth black head against his shoulder. But he had stiffened suddenly. His mind had broken away from her. He was listening.

What's that?"

"What?"

That noise. . .

She raised her head and listened too. Far away down in the town below them, a faint wave of sound broke against the stillness. It came again.

"It's cheering! What's happened?

"It's only in the town! It's nothing.

But the moment of enchantment was broken. There were cries and footsteps in the house. A door banged. Someone rushed past the window. Freddy broke away from her arms and peered out between the heavy curtains. Two or three maids were running down the garden towards that terrace on the wall, which overlooked the market-place. The gardener and the chauffeur followed them, and then the chauffeur's fat wife, puffing and panting and waving a very small flag.

What on earth. . . ," began Magda impatiently. "You'd better go and see.

Crystal and the children had come dashing round the corner of the house. And as they passed they cried out joyfully —

"It's them! It's the men from the *Fanny Briggs*. They've come home!"

The cheering was louder now. It broke in wave after wave, as the news travelled up through the crowded little streets. The whole town was cheering. And Freddy, as he ran down the garden towards the terrace found that he was making a sort of cheering noise himself.

Down there on the terrace the maids, and the gardener and the chauffeur, and the chauffeur's wife, and Crystal and the children were all clamouring for somebody called Jess.

Where is she?"

Bessie Chirgwin.

She must come! She must see!"

She came a moment later, Bessie the kitchenmaid, a thick-set red haired country girl. And they hoisted her up into the place of honour on the wall, where she could see everything, because she was first cousin to Harry Peters, who was coming home that day.

THIRTY feet below them, filling all the market-place, a great sea of dark blue jerseys surged and shouted. All the fishermen of St. Merryn's were there, with their shawled womenfolk, and more came crowding up every minute from the narrow little streets by the harbour and the lone beaches where they had been drying their nets. They did not often come to the upper part of the town, but now they took possession of it like a conquering army. The landlubbers, the shopkeepers, and the summer visitors were pushed aside. Only in a little space cleared by the steps of the old cross, the flutter of white surplices and a gleam of red robes told where the mayor and clergy waited, a little group of landsmen in this seafaring world.

Are they all Cornish?" murmured Freddy.

Oh no," gasped Crystal. "A good many come from the ships down in the harbour. Look! Just below us they're all Swedes and Lascars. And those at the corner of Madoc Street, they're Bretons. They came in with the French Crabbers yesterday. . .

And now they were cheering to another rhythm, the intoxicating throb of a drum. Bang! Bang! Bang! It was coming up Fore Street. Bang! Bang! Bang! The crowd began to sway and push. It broke into a roar that drowned the drum.

Something was coming through that archway of geraniums and cornflowers, something which rocked and swayed above the shoulders of the crowd, a man, three men, three gaunt ghosts of men were being slowly borne across the market-place. Their clothes hung loosely on their starved bodies. They clung, with sheepish grins, to their rocking, swaying chairs. Ted Saundry came first, who had given the last of his water ration to a dying brother. And next came Harry Peters, a shrunken giant, and last of all a sad-faced little man with a beard, Parnon Carnow, father of nine children down in Madoc Street.

They had parched and starved on the high seas for thirteen days. They had lost hope. Two had died. The story of it was still written on their haggard faces. And it was written on the faces of the little procession who came after them. Ted Saundry's mother, though she walked proudly, had lost a son. The crowd pressed back. They made way for her, and for Old Mr. Peters and young Mrs. Peters with her baby, and little red-haired Mrs. Carnow, and a great many Carnow children. Before the last of them straggled up out of Fore Street the cheering had died to a murmur and the murmur to a silence that was like a great sigh.

One could hear the lazy flapping of the

flags on their poles and a sound of women sobbing. Freddy heard Crystal's voice as she spoke to the child in her arms:

"Look at the brave men."

Magda's little boy had been frightened by the cheering. He was clinging to her. She was telling him not to be afraid.

"It's all right, darling. They were only cheering the brave men."

She held him up, high in the air, so that he might see them. And Freddy thought of the women in other days, the women of ancient Rome or Troy, standing on the walls of their cities. Even so must they have held up their young sons to see the brave men, the heroes, return from battle.

And now they were singing. The Town Band had blared its way up the hill into the market-place. By twos, by tens, by hundreds the crowd took up the air. The shrill voice of Beasie Chargwin rang out from the terrace wall:

"While the gathering waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.

But the women's voices were few. They were lost. To every woman in that crowd there were a dozen men. The hymn rose to its crest like a deep, thundering wave —

". . . Till the storm of life is past,
Safe into the haven guide."

"For goodness' sake," whispered Crystal, "catch hold of Betty's frock. She'll fall over the wall if we don't look out. Oh-receive-my-soul-at-last."

MAGDA was standing at one of the windows of the blue room when they all came trooping back to the house.

"Have you been holding a revivalist meeting or what?" she asked unpleasantly.

Crystal stared.

"But weren't you there?" she exclaimed.

"There! Of course, I wasn't. I hate crowds and I hate scenes. I've no desire to get sunstroke or sing hymns over my kitchen-maid's cousin. Of course I'm glad the men are safe. But after all it's their profession. They're paid for it. Still, I'm glad if you've all enjoyed yourselves."

She was very angry. She was angry with all of them, with the maids, and the children, and the gardener and the chauffeur, and the chauffeur's wife, and Freddy and Crystal. For over half an hour they had all forgotten her. She had sat by herself in the blue room and listened to the singing and the cheering with a shrug of her slim shoulders. It was all so vulgar!

Her voice was thin with rage. It shook a little as she turned on Freddy and murmured:

"I'm surprised at you!"

Crystal giggled. It was a shaky apologetic little giggle but Magda spun round upon her venomously.

"I wasn't aware of saying anything funny."

"Oh, it wasn't you," stammered Crystal. "I was just — I mean — I suddenly thought of George Robey when he says 'I'm surprised at you, Agnes!'"

"I see," said Magda icily.

She turned away from them and sailed back into the house.

"*Je*-mima!" said Crystal, looking after her. "I say, I'm afraid I was most foully rude."

Freddy said nothing. He was peering about among the rose bushes. He knew that Magda would shut herself up in the blue room and wait for him to come and apologize. And she would make a little scene. And then she would forgive him, if he wanted to be forgiven. She had been outside it all. She had not seen those men, so starkly thin; she had not seen Crystal standing on the wall with a child in her arms. If only he could find where he had thrown that ring!

"Are you looking for something?" asked Crystal.

"Yes. I . . . it was just about here that I . . . ah, there it is!"

He dived among the bushes and came up again. He had something in his hand. Crystal saw the sparkle of a diamond, and she gave a loud gasp. She'd quite forgotten about their engagement being broken off and everything. Seeing those poor men had put it right out of her head somehow. And what was going to happen now?

She ought to say something very dignified and tactful, and withdraw. But she could not move. She stood there, gaping, as she afterwards described it, like a fish. When Freddy took her hand she let him put the ring back where it belonged.

"We'll take the night train home," he suggested.

She nodded.

"And next time we come here . . ."

But Crystal found her voice again at that —

"Oh *Je*-mima . . . I mean, oh Freddy! Don't let's ever! Not ever! Even when we're married. We're going to be most frightfully happy. I know we are. But don't let's ever come back here again."

# THE DETECTION

EVERY now and then, even in this age of organization and efficiency we experience the old-world thrill of hearing that a real detective has really detected something. In England it is especially the habit of the popular press to announce New Light on old crimes, which for a decade or two have been contentedly left in complete darkness. If our hustling journalists continue these exhumations, and dig up more and more of these doubtful or unidentified corpses, there is every reason to hope that eventually the police will find a Clue to the mysterious murder of William Rufus, and deduce step by step the secret story of what happened to Julius Cæsar.

In the newer countries, from time to time, we are startled to hear of the arrest of a smuggler whose contraband goods have long been conspicuous on nearly every dinner-table, or conventionally handed round in every social circle of the best people. Some [illegible] into the underworld and drag out of its dark and secret den the gang that has been publicly governing a great city for the last four or five years. Such is the technical superiority of modern scientific methods that traces can now be found even of the most widespread and world-wide organizations. At any moment we may hear that the police of Europe or America have seen with their own eyes a colossal factory or dump of dope or ammunition; or have detected a revolution while it is actually raging in the streets. But though detectives may detect armies of gunmen or gangs of revolutionists, there is a limit to their lurid and uncanny power.

So far as I know no detective has ever detected the Detection Club. Detectives have even been asked to dinner by the Club, but I never could be certain, from the expression on their faces, that they had detected it very much. It is a very small and quiet conspiracy to which I am proud to belong; and it meets in various London restaurants and discusses various plots and schemes of crime. True, our ostensible object is to embody the results of discussion, not in crimes, but in crime stories. I am not here to rend the veil from private life, or even to exhibit any morbid curiosity about it, but I have every reason to believe that Mrs. Agatha Christie and Mr. Freeman Wills Crofts and the other members of the Club, have not in fact ever experimented in the coarser and more carnal manifestations of homicide, but have hitherto confined themselves strictly to killing people on paper.

The Club is, in short, a small society of writers of detective stories; and its only object, beyond the higher and more ideal object of amusing itself, is best summed up in two statements. (1) That a detective story is a story, and subject to the same literary laws as a love story or a fairy story or any other form of literature; and (2) That the writer of a detective story is a writer; and is just as much bound in the sight of God and man to be a good writer as if he were the writer of an epic or a tragedy.

IT was only a historical accident, and the historical accident of a specially unhistorical period, that so many serious readers got the notion that a detective story was what was once called a shilling-shocker with no more intellectual ambition than a penny-dreadful. There is nothing in the nature of a tale of murder and mystery to prevent Dante or Shakespeare from writing in that form; indeed, there are many things in Dante and Shakespeare that are much more like a good shocker than they are like a priggish and pretentious novel about sociology and education. It was precisely the aim of the old religious or tragic traditions that death, or the revelation of death, should come as a shock. Both are exactly contrary to the sceptical, callous or indifferent spirit of those who describe all change as what they would call a gradation, or what some of us would call a degradation. The detective story has not shared any of the modern forms of degradation. I have already remarked that the shocker is now the only book that is not merely shocking.

As one who has more than once had the honour of imposing the oaths of admission on new members of the Society, I take a pride in setting out these conditions of membership in their actual form, thereby setting a good example to the Mafia, the Ku-Klux-Klan, the Freemasons, the Illuminati, the Rosicrucians, the Red-Badgers, the

# CLUB

## G. K. CHESTERTON

Blue-Buffaloes, the Green-Gorillas, the League of the Left-handed Haberdashers, the Association of Agnostic Albinos, and all the other secret societies which now govern the greater part of public action in the age of publicity and public opinion. We are a private society but not a secret society; and the following is the exact formula of initiation, drawn up by one or two of the most rising and distinguished writers of English detective fiction.

*The Ruler shall say to the Candidate*

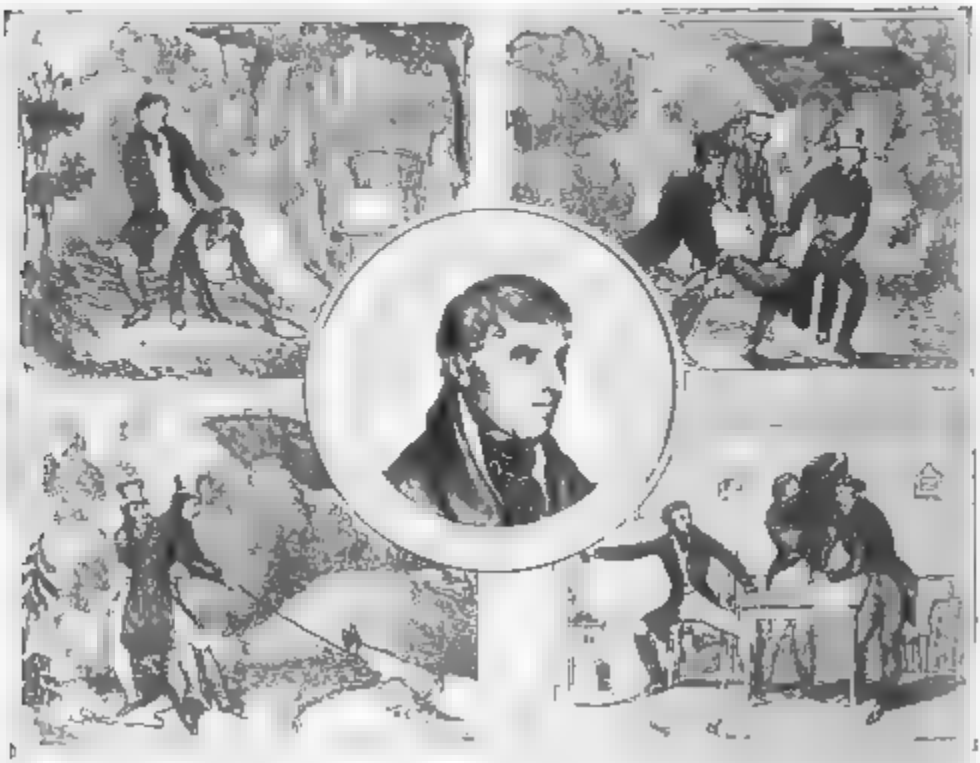
M. N., is it your firm desire to become a Member of the Detection Club?

*Then the Candidate shall answer in a loud voice*

That is my desire.

*Ruler*

Do you promise that your detectives shall well and truly detect the crimes presented to them, using those wits which it may please you to bestow upon them and not placing reliance on nor making use of Divine Revelation, Feminine



*A curious old print which decorates the walls of the Detection Club, describing pictorially the famous murder of William Weare by John Thurtell in 1824. The pictures show the murder of Weare in a country lane, the taking of his body to a local inn, its removal from a pond into which, thrust into a sack, it had been thrown by the murderers, and the subsequent division of the spoils.*

Intuition Mumbo-Jumbo, Jiggery-Pokery, Coincidence or the Act of God?

*Candidate*

I do

*Ruler*

Do you solemnly swear never to conceal a vital clue from the reader?

*Candidate*

I do.

*Ruler*

Do you promise to observe a seemly moderation in the use of Gangs, Conspiracies, Death-Rays, Ghosts, Hypnotism, Trap-Doors, Chinamen, Super-Criminals and Lunatics, and utterly and for ever to forswear Mysterious Poisons unknown to Science?

*Candidate*

I do.

*Ruler*

Will you honour the King's English?

*Candidate*

I will

*Then the Ruler shall ask*

M. N., is there anything you hold sacred?

*Then the Candidate having named a Thing which he holds of peculiar sanctity, the Ruler shall ask*

M. N., do you swear by (*here the Ruler*

*shall name the Thing which the Candidate has declared to be his Peculiar Sanctity*) to observe faithfully all these promises which you have made, so long as you are a Member of the Club?

*But if the Candidate is not able to name a Thing which he holds sacred, then the Ruler shall propose the Oath in this manner following*

M. N., do you as you hope to increase your Sales, swear to observe faithfully all these promises which you have made, so long as you are a Member of the Club?

*Then the Candidate shall say*

All this I solemnly do swear. And I do furthermore promise and undertake to be loyal to the Club, neither purloining nor disclosing any plot or secret communicated to me before publication by any Member, whether under the influence of drink or otherwise.

*Then shall the Ruler say to the Company*

If there be any Member present who objects to the Proposal let him or her so declare.

*If there be an Objector, the Ruler shall appoint a time and place for the seemly discussion of the matter, and shall say to the Candidate, and to the Company*

Forasmuch as we are hungry and that there may be no unseemly wrangling amongst us, I invite you, M. N., to be our Guest to-night, and I hold you to the solemn promise which you have given as touching the theft or revelation of plots and secrets.

*But if there be no Objector, then shall the Ruler say to the Members*

Do you then acclaim M. N. as a Member of our Club?

*Then the Company's Crier, or the Member appointed thereto by the Secretary, shall lead the Company in such cries of approval as are within his compass or capacity. When the cries cease, whether for lack of breath or for any other cause, the Ruler shall make this declaration*

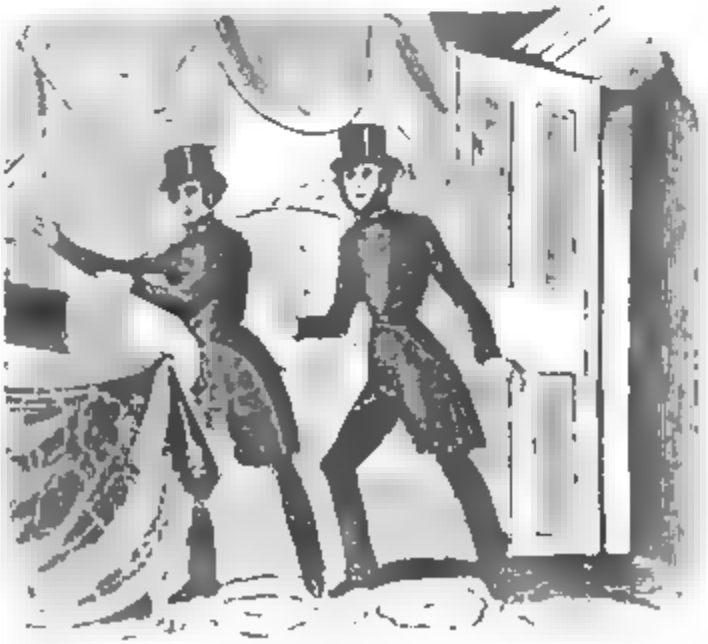
M. N., you are duly elected a Member of the Detection Club, and if you fail to keep your promise, may other writers anticipate your plots, may your publishers do you down in your contracts, may strangers sue you for libel, may your pages swarm with misprints and may your sales continually diminish. Amen.

*Then the Candidate, and after him all the Members present, shall say*

Amen.

I hope I may be forgiven if I dwell with some fond gratification upon one or two of the principles mentioned in this great Constitution of the Republic of Crime Lovers or Amateurs in the Art of Murder. The first provision, which eliminates the preternatural, both of the higher and the lower type, along with various modern forms of the very modern vice of superstition, I need not discuss at length.

To all true lovers of crime it will be apparent that a detective story must never turn into a ghost story. This is not because the writer may not believe in ghosts, or in some cases even in God, or in the general possibility of spiritual interventions from

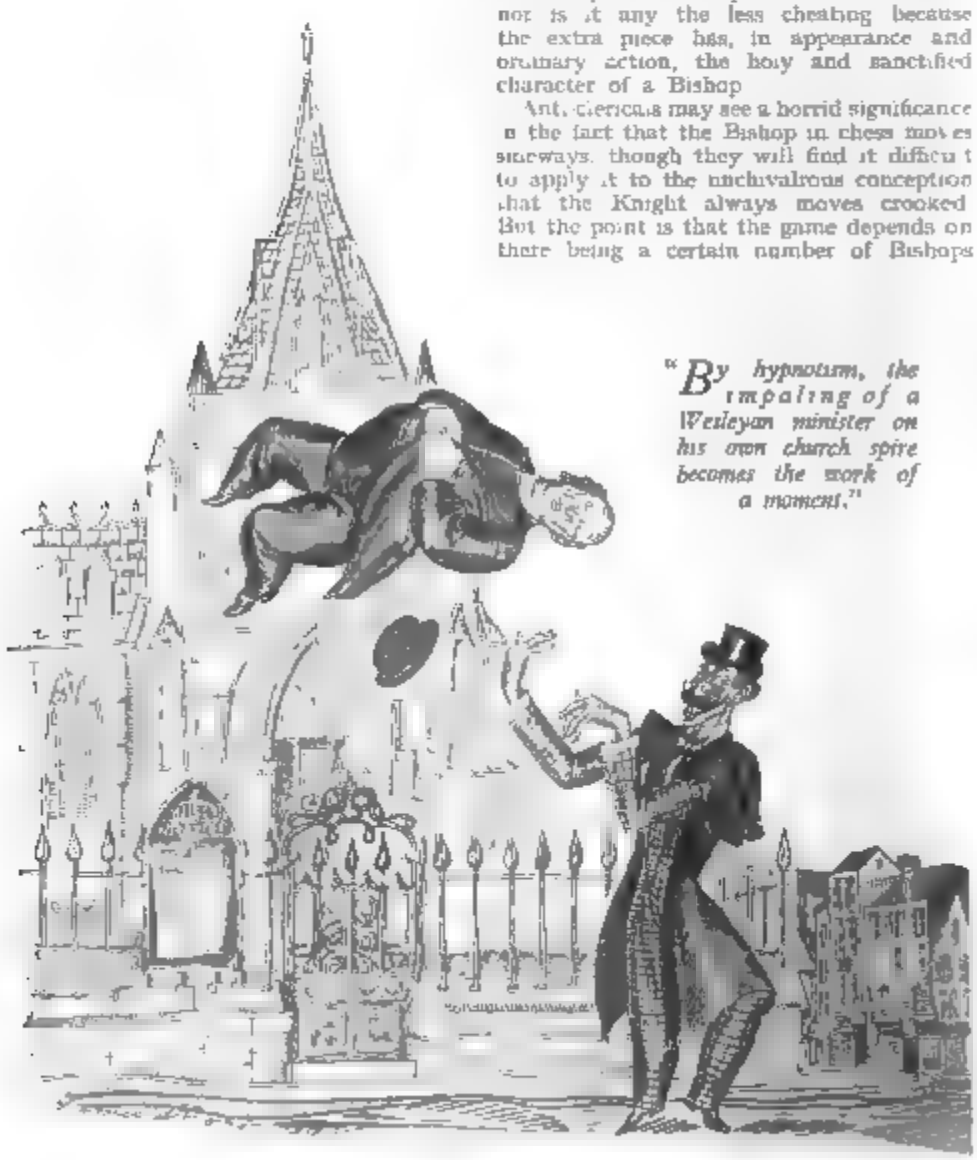


*Another print in the possession of the Detection Club, showing police officers discovering the robbery which was the motive for the murder of Lord William Russell by his valet in 1840.*

another world. On this matter the Club shows the broadest and most tolerant spirit, and several members, notoriously in possession of a Deity of some kind have already managed to insinuate themselves into its ranks. It is founded on the fundamentally sound principle that spiritual influences are infinite, whereas the police novel by its nature is finite. It is not fair if it is not finite, it is not fair if it does not work with a fixed and limited set of laws and conditions, and as far as possible, with a fixed and limited number of persons, places, exits, entrances, and even opportunities.

It is a game, and a game may be defined as an enjoyment of limitations, even of artificial limitations. To solve the problem of the shooting of a Wesleyan minister, or some such simple and everyday affair, by introducing an Afreet, an Archangel, a Witch from Endor, a Winged Horse, a Chinese Dragon, a deceased relative exuding Ectoplasm, or any such intruder on the family or the house-party, is of the nature of cheating, exactly as it is cheating at chess to put an extra piece on to the board; nor is it any the less cheating because the extra piece has, in appearance and ordinary action, the holy and sanctified character of a Bishop.

Anti-clericals may see a horrid significance in the fact that the Bishop in chess moves sideways, though they will find it difficult to apply it to the unchivalrous conception that the Knight always moves crooked. But the point is that the game depends on there being a certain number of Bishops



*"By hypnotism, the impaling of a Wesleyan minister on his own church spire becomes the work of a moment."*

on the board and a certain number of moves for the Bishop and the game would break down, as a game, if the Bishop could excommunicate the pawns instead of taking them. This logical and limited square like a chess-board which the French call the *cadre* is in some degree necessary to all art, but is vitally necessary to the art of the detective story. Anybody can murder Wesleyan ministers if he is allowed to call spirits from the vasty deep to assist him, the problem is how best to perform the necessary task in a quiet, practical and economical manner, with the tools provided at a particular place and time.

WHEN this principle is understood it will be seen at once that it applies almost as strongly to the first things against which the neophyte is warned in the third clause, that is, against Gangs and Conspiracies. If there is a vast secret society whose ramifications spread from Jamaica to Japan, it is no matter of wonder that it can manage to knock off a Wesleyan minister or two in Wimbledon or Worthing. Not being a matter of wonder, it ceases to be a matter of mystery and we might just as well try to make a detective story out of the dead body of one peasant left behind by the all-destroying march of Attila and the Huns.

All-destroying Attila reminds me of the next item of Death Rays on which I hold very strong views indeed. All will note the magnificent liberality and generosity in the spirit of the Club, in only asking its members to observe "a seemly moderation" in the use of these three things even of the last.

For my part, I should not be sorry to see a Death-Ray finally extinguishing all Death-Rays. Whenever I find a writer describing some marvellous man of science who is going to impose peace on the whole earth by the threat of a Death Ray—then I know not only that the writer writes bad stories, believes in bad science and bad philosophy, but I know he has bad morals, a bad religion, and a soul in a state of shocking and terrifying badness though he may be entirely unconscious of it. I will not argue with him here, doubtless he is himself in a state of innocence that is of invincible ignorance. I will only say that peace by permission of an eminent

*William Corder, whose crime inspired the famous melodrama, "Maria Marten, or the Murder in The Red Barn." From an old print in the possession of the Detection Club*

man of science would be if possible rather worse than war and life under the menace of a Death Ray considera y worse than death

I feel the same about the scient fic internationalists, who talk about war becoming so frightful that no soldier would dare to fight They do not seem to realize that they are boasting of having invented an nstrument of torture so horrible that no martyr would ever dare to die for the truth But these slavish and cowardly philosophies are at the very opposite extreme from the noble art of murder, or the detection of murder as practised in the true detective story All the rest of the occasions on which moderation is urged seem to me to be chosen with discretion and justice I agree that the detective should be careful about Trap-Doors both in theory and practice, but I think Trap-Doors are much more sport ng than Hypnotism

A Trap-Door like any other door has its limitations, it opens inwards or outwards and whi e it is easy to fall down through it I am told it is more difficult to fall up. But Hypnotism is a perfect instance of that unfair use of the infinite or unknown, of which we have spoken For as nobody knows anything about hypnot sm anybody can be made to fall upstairs or downstairs, or float up to the ceiling, or fly through the air and the impaling of the Wesleyan minister on the spike of his own church spire becomes the work of a moment

I am glad a firm stand was taken on the subject of Chinamen The incessant and reckless propagation of wicked Chinamen to do the dirty work of Europeans in their sensational novels, has been one of the most servile and anti-social forms of the employment of Chinese labour But I am glad to say that it has been to some extent stopped by the spirited action of an American writer of mystery stories, Mr Earl Derr Biggers who has created a good Chinaman who is also a very credible and convincing Chinaman, and made him the policeman instead of the criminal

THESE are the principles w th which the Detection Club is trying in a very quiet way to influence the detective type of fiction. It is in a very quiet way, and it has no connexion with some similar associations proclaimed in the advertisements of particular publishers these may be quite legitimate methods of publicity but they are merely methods of publicity and the Club I speak of works altogether in private. though not without some motives of public spirit It is small enough to be more or less a meeting of friends though it contains men whose names are sufficiently widely known Mr Austin Freeman the creator of Dr Thorndyke who has perhaps come nearest to occupying the empty throne of Sherlock Holmes, and Mr E C Bentley, who wrote what is generally regarded as the best modern English mystery story 'Trent's Last Case', Miss Dorothy L Sayers. who sustains about the best level, in my opinion of lively and intelligent writing in this style and others who have gained fame in departments different from this, a really fine novelist like Miss Clemence Dane or a really fine sociologist like Mr G D H Cole

There are other popular writers of my own generation like Mr Edgar Jepson and many promising representatives of the rising generation like Mr Anthony Berkeley But I do not fancy for instance. that the Club would have fitted in very well with a colossal cosmopolitan publicity like that of Mr Edgar Wallace I say so, not so much because he was a best-seller as because he was a mass-producer

Mr [illegible] has ingenious plots but there was inevitably something in his type of plotting that recalls our shyness in the presence of the Omnipresent Chinaman or the League of the Scarlet Scorpion He was a huge furnace and factory of fiction, imposing by its scale but not suited to this particular purpose. It would be like going with one's family and friends on a motor tour and finding oneself escorted by all the cars out of the factories of Mr Ford It would always raise the question of whether Mr Ford belonged to the Club or the Club belonged to Mr Ford Therefore in our little group. the external fame or success is largely accidental and the friendship is the original fact

Perhaps the most characteristic thing that the Detection Club ever did was to publish a detective story which was quite a good detective story, but the best things in which could not possibly be understood by anybody except the gang of criminals that had produced it. It was called "The Floating Admiral" and was written somewhat uproariously in the manner of one of those paper games in which each writer in turn continues a story of which he knows neither head or tail. It turned out remarkably readable. but the joke of it will never be discovered by the ordinary reader, for the truth is that almost every chapter thus contributed by an amateur detective is a satire on the personal peculiarities of the last amateur detective This it will be sternly said is not the way to become a best-seller It is a matter of taste but to my mind there is always a curious tingle of obscure excitement in the works of this kind which have remained here and there in literary history the sort of book that it is even more enjoyable to write than to read

# THE JOYOUS JOURNEY OF GYPSY AND JUNE

*IMPRIMIS* —except for a hundred which June had managed to borrow from her godfather they were both temporarily broke. Item, they were both heart-broken—with only faint prospects of repair

"Therefore," said Gypsy, "let us load up the Primrose Peril and go South."

"But will they follow us?" asked June, "And can we on a hundred?"

"Something" replied Gypsy, "is sure to turn up"

Which should sufficiently explain the subsequent arrival at Boulogne on a peculiarly gorgeous afternoon in early August, of two bright-eyed young women —one tall and dark with the South's own olive in her complexion, the other golden-haired of medium height, with cheeks too suspiciously like English dog-roses to be quite the natural product of the English countryside and a very tiny saloon car, described in the triptyque as "yellow with red wheels"

"Makin' a big trip?" asked the immoderately well-groomed young man whom they had noticed on the boat and who had seemed in such a hurry to clear his super-charged Clemonda

"Only down to Monte" June spoke.

Stoppin' in Paris?"

"No. Fontainebleau That's to say if we get there."

Well—they don't do you too badly at the Lion de France"

The super-charged Clemonda went off with a roar June's blue eyes followed it.

"He reminds me a little of Harry declared a wistful June

"The less you're reminded of Harry" snapped Gypsy, "the better we shall enjoy ourselves."

"Well you've been talking about Jack ever since we started," retorted June.

"If mademoiselle will please let me see the engine-number" interposed the Customs officer And five minutes later the Primrose Peril a so, was away, Gypsy driving, June studying the Michelin guide

"That hotel at Fontainebleau" said June, turning to it, "looks frightfully expensive But perhaps, if we shared a room and only had something cheap for dinner——"

We'll never get there in time for dinner

To

GILBERT FRANKAU

*illustrated by* STANLEY DAVIS

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And what's the use of one man anyway? Even if it was a bite

I wish you weren't so coarse, Gypsy.'

"I wish you weren't so susceptible, June.'

'I'm not. I only want Harry back. Still—he did look rather like free cocktails, or even a bottle of bubbly."

With kisses to follow.

They changed places some miles beyond Montreuil, and again just before they reached Abbeville. But the less said about the rest of their drive to Fontainebleau the better—for June's map-reading was just as accurate as Gypsy's language was ladylike.

'If you don't stop swearing at me," snapped June, with darkness long fallen and St. Germain-en-Laye still to traverse, 'I shall take the train straight back to London to-morrow morning. After all, it's my money——"

"But it's my car——"

'If you call it a car——'

ARRIVAL, however, and the sight of two young men still lingering over their cigars and brandy among the geraniums of the Lion de France, produced comparative calm.

'So it was two bites after all," whispered Gypsy. 'I wonder who the other one can be? He looks a little like Jack."

Well, Jack never did look very English," whispered back the still-vexed June.

Meanwhile the taller of the two, he of the supercharged Clemonda, was already rising and coming to them down the steps.

"So you took my advice," he said, displaying good teeth under a moustache curled like a Guardsman's. So glad. If the Vicomte and I had only known I had to meet him in Paris, that was why I was in such a hurry to get away from Bonsoque, we'd have waited dinner for you.'

And Captain Cathcart, as he subsequently informed them he called himself, with his friend the Viscount of Rousillon, were still waiting when, some twenty minutes later, by which time June's temper and June's colouring had both been entirely restored, she and Gypsy came hatless to dine.

"Won't you have just one cocktail with us first?" asked Cathcart of June.

"Oh, no. Not a cocktail," protested the Viscount, in almost perfect English, to Gypsy. "A little glass of real wine is so much better. They have a champagne here, and of a vintage!"

But we don't even know you," protested Gypsy, and it was then that the introductions took place.

The champagne turned out to be everything the Viscount had claimed for it. But the prices they observed on the menu, the price of their one room had almost decided them on flight—reduced Gypsy's appetite to a mere omelette, and June's to cold ham.

'A pity you did not arrive earlier," declared the Viscount to Gypsy. "Our *soles diables* with you to share them would have been real ambrosia."

And with you to share the *tournedos Rossini* which followed," opined Cathcart to June, 'the gods themselves would have envied our feast."

'What gods?" asked June.

Oh, dear old Pan. And possibly Venus. And talkin' of jolly old Venus——'

"But you mustn't," retorted June. At least not in front of my friend."

"Oh, she isn't listenin' to us.'

Presently, however, Cathcart, his foot meeting no response under the table, slackened his attack, asking, 'And what are your plans for to-morrow? We thought of takin' it a bit easy. Our car's givin' a spot of trouble. And the Viscount hates rushin' things."

A sentiment hardly endorsed by Gypsy when they finally reached their room.

He was all over me at once," declared Gypsy. "The complimentary stuff. My hands are like lilies, and my teeth like pearls, and the Lord knows what my eyes are like, except that he isn't going to sleep for thinking about them. These foreigners seem to imagine that all women are goofy. Of course, I tickled him off properly. By the way, what were you and the gallant Captain whispering about?"

Oh, nothing like that. Harry wouldn't like me to." And June, smiling to herself, climbed into bed.

## II

THEY had a short conference when they woke—June all for an early start, Gypsy not quite so enthusiastic.

The Viscount says we oughtn't to leave without seeing the Château," said Gypsy. 'I rather gathered that he——"

But when they got downstairs there was no Cathcart and no Viscount, only a note which read: 'Charming and well-named couple, we have decided not to linger, after all—myself because I feel that blondes are unresponsive, my friend because he has a *fiancée* who awaits him in Monte Carlo. Yours regretfully, George C.'

Which left June nothing to say except.

I suppose you hardly want to see the Château now, darling, and the pair of them nothing to do but pay their inordinate bill and seek the Primrose Peril in her garage—where they found, slightly to their surprise, an *agent-de-ville* who asked to see their papers.

But why? asked Gypsy.

*"So you took my advice," he said, coming to them down the steps. "If we had only known we'd have waited dinner for you."*

A mere formality, mademoiselle.' The French policeman twirled a gallant moustache. " But since the death of our late President, you will understand the authorities. . . ." And, shown their triptyque and driving permits, he touched a respectful hat.

It was a grand day, and the long roads almost trafficless. Each, that morning, was feeling a little pensive.

Neither, however, voiced her thoughts—till long after a wayside luncheon when Gypsy said, " It's going to be rather dull this evening if we don't meet anybody, ' and June, " Well, let's drive all night. We might get held up by bandits."

But just outside Auxerre the Peril began to cough, and was still coughing when they braked at the garage by the bridge.

' This carburetter," declared the garagist is dirty. It is extremely dirty. And if I am not mistaken the *vase* is cracked."

He declared, moreover, to the puzzled pair, that a *vase* was a *vase*, and he would show mademoiselle where it was placed.

But just as Gypsy descended to acquire this knowledge the Scarlet Amilcar, which June had seen parked under some trees about half a mile back, came fussing up to the petrol-pump, and out of it stepped the gentleman with the beard.

IT was a fascinating little beard, and its wearer, who spoke the most perfect English immediately offered his services as interpreter of the puzzling word, which turned out to be nothing but the French for *later*." And a little later, after they had decided to leave the Peril at the garage, he as good as insisted on driving them and their suit-cases up the hill to the Hotel de l'Epee, saying: " But it is no trouble at all, for I myself am going to stay there."

By which time Gypsy, sitting beside him, had begun to feel strangely tired.

' I don't think I'm up to driving all night," said Gypsy over her shoulder. " We must have done the best part of two hundred miles already. If the hotel's decent what about us staying there, too? We can go back for the bus after dinner."

' Let's have a look at the place first," said June, who had left her guide in the Peril. " We don't want another expensive one." And she added, *sotto voce*, " Who's being susceptible now?"

The Hotel of the Sword, however, proving slightly more reasonable than the Lion, she eventually withdrew her objections, quoting only, as they brushed their h

' What's the use of one man, anyway?

To which Gypsy retorted, " One man's better than none, darling. And even if we don't get any bubbly to-night, he ought to be worth a couple of cocktails."

Not even an apéritif, however, was vouchsafed by the bearded one, though he bowed to them most politely from his seat under the trees as they passed to their table; and Gypsy, nose in her coffee-cup, had already given him up for lost, when he suddenly re-approached, and, bowing again, said ' If mademoiselle will not take it as a liberty, I could re-escort her to the garage.

And before June could suggest, " But why not leave it there for the night darling?" Gypsy was already on her feet.

I wonder if he's got a [illegible]' thought June, watching the bearded one take Gypsy's arm. But it was not until a good fifty minutes later by her pearl-set wrist-watch (Harry's gift) that she heard the Peril come chugging back.

" Monsieur Robineau," said Gypsy, returning with him after yet another ten minutes spent in the dimness of the hotel garage, " insisted on showing me the Cathedral by moonlight. Oh, and can I have some money, please? He was kind enough to pay the little bill."

' How much?" asked June, a trifle tersely.

A hundred and fifteen francs, darling.

So June counted over the money. Then Monsieur Robineau, though he had remained by the table, did not propose a drink.

He only fondled his beard, saying, " I have been trying to persuade your friend that although the Hotel of the Big Stag at Maçon is very *comme-il-faut* and extremely comfortable, Maçon may be a bit far. So if I may be permitted to offer a little counsel I would recommend a more modest place. One that is not very well known yet. About sixty kilometres south of Lyons. The Hostelry of the Two Hawks.

' And will you be there?" asked June.

' But no, mademoiselle. Much though it would delight me to renew our acquaintance I have business to do in this neighbourhood.

Shortly after which he excused himself—having proved, at least according to Gypsy, soothing a slightly disgruntled June through the doorway of their communicating bedrooms, " A perfectly nice man, my dear. Even if he wasn't as liberal as *your* pick-up. To-morrow, he's going to show us both the Cathedral by daylight.

Next morning, however, though they breakfasted downstairs and quite early, Monsieur Robineau also, and leaving a note behind him, had vanished.

## III

THEY were away from Auxerre by nine-thirty. Once again the sun shone its brightest. But there was a suspicion of a wind, and as they fared farther and farther South the gusts grew stronger, till

*June could just make out the face of the Vicomte, white and twitching on its pillow—and now his mutterings were quite distinct.*

eventually they had to close both sunshine-roof and windscreen.

"Does it mean rain?" asked June.

No. A mistral in the Rhone Valley I'm afraid."

And once through Lyons, where they lunched late and expensively, Gypsy's fears were justified full force.

This particular wind," said she, gritting her teeth at it, "always bores me to death."

Well, it's your turn to be bored, isn't it?" snapped June, whom the mistral was also affecting, and silence followed for ten long miles.

What was the name of that hostelry?" asked Gypsy then.

Which one?"

'Robineau's, of course.'

The Two Pigeons,' thought June.

Not pigeons. Eagles.

'My dear, I'm positive it wasn't Eagles.'

Deep in this vital argument they slogged on for another fifteen miles—and always the mistral blew more fiercely, frettng their nerves to rags. But every time Gypsy tried to close the driving-window June protested.

If you do that, we'll stifle."

AND June was still protesting when, at a bend in the road, they saw the sign. The Hostelry of the Two Hawks. Its Wines. Its Cooking. First to Your Left. At one Kilometre." Nor did she signify any approval beyond a terse, "It looks lousy to me, darling, but if this rotten car of yours is going to break down again, we'd better not risk Maçon," as Gypsy turned the Peril up a rough track into sudden peace.

The peace was so sudden that it took them a good minute to realise the cause of it—a sharp upslope of grey crag that blocked out the wind. And beyond this they came round an unkempt drive, also mysteriously sheltered from the mistral, into sight of a grey stone house, tower-flanked with bright blue window-frames and several blue doorways, the largest of which, open, led into a sombre courtyard, where they perceived another car.

I suppose this is it," said Gypsy, doubtfully. But even as she spoke, the young porter came out, and, peering at them through horn-rimmed spectacles, inquired:

Is it accommodation for the night you two ladies are seeking? If so, I will fetch Madame immediately."

A moment whereafter Madame herself appeared, and because Madame appeared so much less like a hotel-keeper than a minister character June had seen in a play she felt thoroughly uncomfortable as they followed her through a dim hall and up the winding stairway of one of the towers. A few minutes later Madame left them alone in a bathless room which hardly held its two single beds and the rest of its furniture—and whose lock June tested surreptitiously just before the porter arrived with their bags.

Tea?" said the porter to Gypsy. But certainly. I will order it. Here? Or on the terrace?

And searching for the terrace, which was at the back of the house, whom should they encounter but George Cathcart, who said: 'But what luck! And what on earth brings you here? I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw your car drive up.'

Which seemed to provide June with some reassurance that Madame's looks belied the reputation of her house.

Cathcart, in blue beret, a red vest, open at the neck and brown linen trousers, looked very much less like a Guardsman than the immaculately turned-out youth they had first noticed on the boat. His moustache, too, seemed to have lost its upcurl. But both June and Gypsy were too pleased to find anyone they knew, and more especially an Englishman at the Two Hawks, to take much notice of such details—and when he said, in answer to Gypsy's inquiry about the Viscount, "Poor chap. He was taken queer. Quite suddenly. Just after we left Lyons. That's why we had to pull in here instead of goin' right through to Valence," both were all sympathy for his plight.

Waitin' for the doctor now," he went on. Can't make out what's the matter with the fellow."

And half-way through their tea, they heard a car arrive, and Cathcart left them, returning some fifteen minutes later with the news, "Doctor can't quite make out what it is. Poor chap's in considerable pain and delirious. Fraid you'll have to excuse me."

Nor did they see him again till shortly before dinner by which time Gypsy, garaging the Peril in the sombre courtyard, had stumbled on a little mystery. For there were only two other cars in the place—neither a Clemonda and neither with a G.B. plate.

By the way," therefore asked Gypsy after tender inquiries about the patient, now reported to be in much less pain though still a little light about the head, "where have you hidden your bus?"

'Hidden?'" asked Cathcart. Then, smiling, 'Oh, you mean the Clemonda. I left her in Paris and came on in the Viscount's, subsequently offering to 'buy you both a bottle of the best if you'll let me sit at your table.'

Half-way through their meal, moreover—excellently served in a low panelled dining-room of which, except for a Gargantuan Frenchman and his apparent spouse, they

were the sole occupants—a second bottle followed the first.

"Need it," pronounced Cathcart. "Need it badly. Illness alway does give me the hump. Do you think"—this to Gypsy—"I ought to get in a nurse or anything? He really is a bit off his nut, you know. Keeps on ravin' about that girl he's engaged to. I say," diffidently, "would it be askin' too much of you to come up and have a squint at him?"

"I?" Gypsy's eyes were wide, and a little scornful. "I? Certainly not, Captain Cathcart. If the Viscount's as ill as all that, you'd better send for his own *fiancée*."

"You, then?" This to June. "After all, when a chap's ill he needs a spot of womanly sympathy."

And eventually it was June—though how much this can be attributed to her womanly sympathy with the invalid, and how much to the brandies that followed the champagne and to the fact that Cathcart's foot had sought hers so frequently while they were dining, is difficult to estimate—who followed him up the other tower.

"Just you wait here a moment," he said, guiding her, with only the gentlest of pressures, into a shuttered sitting-room and, passing through a door at the far end of it, peered in, and tip-toed away.

Raoul," she heard. "*Attention. C'est moire.*"

Then, all in a flash, Cathcart was back in the doorway, signalling to her that she should come in.

The bedside lamp, shaded in dark blue, gave only the faintest light. But June could just make out the face of Raoul de Roussillon, white and twitching on its pillow—and now his mutterings were quite distinct.

"*Madeleine*," he kept muttering. "*Madeleine. Chérie. Ous. Je te les apporte. Une grande boîte. Une grande belle boîte de trois kilos.*"

"Think I'd better give him his medicine," said Cathcart. "You might pass me that bottle."

As she picked up the bottle June noticed, vaguely, that an opened telegram lay beside it. But though the telegram lay face upwards she did not trouble to read it—her eyes being otherwise engaged.

"That ought to simmer him down a bit," whispered Cathcart, his black eyes still busy with June's blue; and immediately after his draught, the patient certainly seemed calmer, though he still kept on muttering. "*Madeleine! Une boîte. Une grande belle boîte.*"

"Funny business, delirium," vouchsafed Cathcart as the pair of them tip-toed back into the sitting-room. "Do you know what all that's about? Believe it or not—chocolates."

"Chocolates?" echoed June.

"Yes. Madeleine—that's his *fiancée*, you know—is just crazy about a certain brand of 'em. She asked him to bring her down a box. They've got cocoanut in 'em, I believe. Anyway, they won't keep longer than a week. Hence the panic. Silly, isn't it? I mean, bein' as fond of a girl as all that. Though, mind you, Madeleine isn't a bit like you are. She's like that pal of yours. A brunette. And responsive."

Which last sentence, for some obscure reason, seemed to banish all thought of the invalid from both their minds.

## IV

IT was a full fifty minutes later by Gypsy's wrist-watch before a slightly flushed June returned to the dining-room.

"Sorry," said June. "But he's rather bad. So George—I mean, Captain Cathcart—asked me to stay and help for a bit. By the way, don't you think that if this mistral lasts over to-morrow—"

"No mistral," pronounced Gypsy with some severity, "ever lasts more than four days. Our waiter, to whose society you left me for so long, says that this one has now been blowing for exactly ninety-six hours."

Whereupon she rose from the table, and June, murmuring only, "Cathedrals by moonlight to you, darling," followed her to their room.

This time Gypsy locked the door, and June undressed in a frigid silence. Still silent she sought her sheets.

"Even if he is like Harry," began Gypsy, "there's money to be considered. We can't spend it all on the journey."

"But it's my money—"

"So you said before."

"And anyway, he bought you something to drink."

"I don't—isolate myself with a man just because he buys me a drink."

"Oh, shut up."

"All right. Only I warn you I've ordered breakfast for half-past six."

"Half-past six. But he won't even be up."

"Well, you can write to him. Like he did to us. After all, you're engaged, too."

"I'm not. At least no more than you are. And I won't get up at half past six."

Seven-fifteen exactly, however, found June already emerging on to the terrace where Cathcart, looking vaguely agitated, had been pacing for the last half hour.

"So you're runnin' away," he said.

"It isn't my fault. It's Gypsy's."

"I know." His voice was all sympathy. "It was she who ordered you to be called."

"But how did you know that?"

"Well, as a matter of fact the waiter

told me. I had to keep him up most of the night. Poor old Rousillon. He's quite conscious this morning. But still worryin'

About those absurd chocolates?

'Yes.' And suddenly Cathcart smiled

As a matter of fact" he went on still smiling, the moment I heard you were off I had a brain-wave. If you re goin' straight through to Monte, what about your takin' the baby things to Madeleine? That d put his mind at rest anyway

And while June was still thinking, "If that s all he s got to say to me, I don't care how soon we go," the gallant Captain had already left her, to return only just as Gypsy brought the Peril out of the court-

*"You, too, will hold your tongue till further orders, mademoiselle," said the little Monégasque*

yard, carrying a largish paper-wrapped parcel under his arm.

"*Voilà*," he said, "All present and correct. Ad addressed and labelled There s a note for her inside, too. So all you've got to do is to telephone her at the jolly old Paris as soon as you arrive, and tell them to fetch it. Please '—this to June, standing a trifle pensive, while Gypsy supervised the strapping-on of their suitcases— take it. Just as . . . my recompense

'What for?"

'Your sudden departure, of course,"

smiled Cathcart already stowing the thing out of sight under the various untidinesses which crowded the back of the saloon

He shook June's hand touched his beret to her as Gypsy drove off.

And still I'm glad we're not staying she thought Yet for five good miles sentiment had its way with her so that she hardly noticed till the Peril swerved to avoid them, the two *gendarmes* pedalling frantically along the empty road

'Serve 'em damn well right if I'd killed 'em." quoth Gypsy But after that their journey was eventless over roads so emptily perfect that all cares seemed to leave them and they reached Aix-en-Provence in time for tea

What price the Peril to-day?' crooned Gypsy We're averaging a good fat forty You take her now—and if you keep your foot down we'll dine in Monte'

So Avignon shot by, and Brignolles, and Fréjus, and at eight-five precisely, by the clock which presides over Monte Carlo, they parked at the very foot of the Casino gardens.

But even as blonde June parked the Peril after that glorious run, she felt her heart stop beating. Neither were brunette's heart-beats any too steady as she answered blonde's. "Darling they must be here They must have followed us. Did you see it?' with a terse, "Of course I saw it I'm not blind And I've been in it a damn sight more often than you have

Nor was it until yet another fifty minutes had elapsed, by which time four reunited hearts forgathered at the Paris bar were beating almost in unison, that Gypsy seated by her Jack, said to June, seated by her Harry, "By the way darling, what about finding somewhere to sleep, and what about a spot of dinner and what about delivering those chocs?"

## V

IT seemed hardly worth while explaining to a Harry who had 'rushed through me Grenoble in forty-eight hours, because damn it, I couldn't do without you a moment longer, sweetheart," the precise history of the parcel Cathcart had thrust on them So the only answer June gave to that triple-barrelled question from Gypsy was 'May as well get rid of the chocs first- especially as she's staying here and having disentangled herself from Harry, she went back to the Peril

What's all this about?' asked Jack

Gypsy however, on mature consideration also decided reticence to be the better part of sweetheart hood

Oh it's just a parcel we were asked to bring down," said Gypsy

To which Jack had just retorted, 'You girls are all born smugglers,' when the totally incredible occurrence actually started

"You three,' said a sudden voice behind them "will now keep quite quiet and do exactly as I order you', and turning from the rail, Jack and Harry perceived that the bar had emptied except for its attendants and one exiguous Monégasque who was covering them with a very large revolver

While as though this were not sufficiently incredible there appeared almost simultaneously at the two windows of the bar two soldiers—a whole file of Monte Carlo's own eighteen blue-coated legionaries—to whom the exiguous civilian with the revolver said If they make the slightest attempt to escape to warn, or even to speak with one another drill them where they sit

So that Jack, Gypsy, and Harry were still sitting motionless on their three bar-stools when June, carrying her parcel under her arm, and accompanied by a page-boy whom she had chanced to encounter on the steps, came quickly in

Miss Madeleine D'Arblay," the page was saying 'but as I say mademoiselle she is only just outside, in the hall You have only to wait, and I will fetch her

'But I don't want her fetched' began June. "All I want——'

At which exact moment she also perceived the little Monégasque, who now spoke again

'You, too, will hold your tongue to further orders, mademoiselle,' said the little Monégasque, and to the page-boy Thou hast thy orders, obey them

And while a completely petrified June still stared at a still completely motionless Harry a vast woman auburn of hair and flashing of eye in pillar-box-red pyjamas was already approaching her with the words. "The boy says you have a packet for me From the Two Hawks, no doubt

Whereupon the exiguous Monégasque gave a peculiar whistle, another whole file of Monte Carlo's standing army appeared at the two doors of the bar the vast woman gave vent to a string of oaths—and twenty minutes later found five prisoners, four of them still under the impression they were dreaming, faced in a large gloomy chamber by a fierce-looking functionary who said to his subordinate "You have done well to catch the whole gang red-handed, Francois Obviously from the description we have of them and the fact that they arrived in an English car these are the two men also. Whatever our French comrades may think about it and glaring across his desk continued "Open the box now And let us confront them with the preliminary evidence of their crime."

And even while Gypsy and June were still

staring at the contents of Cathcart's box, which appeared to be mere powdered sugar instead of chocolate, he turned on them barking. "All is known. You were with these two men before they fled from Fontainebleau. That was three nights ago. You met André le Barbu, their accomplice at Auxerre. That was two nights ago. He directed you to rejoin these two men at the Hostelry of the Two Hawks, advising them he had done so by a telegram in my possession. You spent last night with these two men at the Hostelry of the Two Hawks, and this morning, just before they once again fled from the French *gendarmes* who came to arrest them, they passed you the cocaine."

"The cocaine," stammered June.

*Mais oui*. Surprising, is it not? Yet here we have the cocaine itself which I hereby confiscate. The first interrogatory is, therefore, at an end. François, remove the English prisoners. Confine the men and the women separately. Madeleine D'Arblay will remain for further interrogatories by me. The others, I will examine again to-morrow morning."

NOR was it until the following morning—for the enormous brunette's, "I refuse to be interrogated alone. Monsieur le Commissaire, and certainly not in these pyjamas," went for as little as Harry's. "But damn it, man, we only landed in France the day before yesterday, so how could we have been in Fontainebleau three nights ago?"—that the production of Jack's triptyque, stamped legibly with their landing-date, persuaded the Commissary that they were not "of the gang."

And our *fiancées*, monsieur," pleaded Jack. "They are not of the gang, either. We swear it. And we are responsible British subjects. We are willing to go bail."

And when the Commissary, stern as ever, replied, "Bail! But what is that, monsieur?" it was again Jack, with his slightly foreign manner, who explained.

"Why, monsieur, if one person is accused of a crime, and another person is willing to deposit money—shall we say, in this case, five thousand francs—as guarantee that the person in question will not attempt to evade justice—"

Whereto the Commissary made answer: "The ways of British justice, sir, are a model to the world. In this case, however, the crime of dope-smuggling being a very serious one, and the ladies accused of it being—if you will allow me to say so—of exceptional beauty, I should have thought that five thousand francs apiece would be more equitable", adding only, "One presumes that, in the event of our coming to what you, I believe, call a gentleman's agreement on this basis, there will be no need for me to give you a receipt."

VI

WHICH should sufficiently explain the subsequent arrival at an obscure restaurant on the Condamine of two young men who had not shaved for thirty-six hours—accompanied by two slightly dishevelled young women certain lines under whose bright eyes bespoke a night of conference behind prison bars.

And "Darlings," said those two bright-eyed young women in answer to further interrogatories, "don't you trust us? After all, we couldn't help those two wretches talking to us at Fontainebleau, or that other wretch talking to us at Auxerre either. While as for our meeting them again at the Two Hawks, we should never have gone to the wretched place if it hadn't been for that awful mistral!"

Whereafter, for though King's Counsel has been known in rare instances to shake the testimony of one woman, the evidence of two, especially when agreed in conference, will pass muster at all but the Ultimate Assizes, nothing remains to chronicle except that Madeleine d'Arblay also succeeded—though by what means is still obscure to the innocent teller of the tale—in securing her release, and a fragment of a conversation which took place some year later between Mrs. Jack and Mrs. Harry, bright eyes bent over a paper which announces "Three Daring Dope-Smugglers Arrested At Last."

"Your birds, Gypsy darling," says the blonde Mrs. Harry, pointing to two of those photographs. "Funny how you always like foreign-looking men. You'll be making Jack grow a beard next just to remind you of André le Barbu—or Mr. Robineau as he called himself. By the way—I've always meant to ask you—did the Cathedral at Auxerre look very satisfying by moonlight?"

"Well,—not entirely," answers the dark Mrs. Jack, smiling. Then, with a finger on the third photograph. "Do you know, June, darling, he really is a little like Harry. I expect you noticed that even more clearly while you and he were nursing my poor Viscount—or rather Etienne Girard as I see he is really called. By the way—I've always meant to ask you—did Captain Cathcart, apparently that is his active name, find your nursing quite satisfactory?"

"Well—not entirely," says Mrs. Harry.

And she also smiles—as only young wives, trusted by adoring husbands, can.

# THREE

ALTHOUGH wealth and success had come to him in such very large measure, Sir John Chandler had many real friends and only a few lukewarm enemies. Nobody seemed to envy him his grand house in Carlton Gardens, his lovely place in Hampshire, his yacht, his horses, cars, pictures. People said that he was a fine type of the self-made man without pretence, ostentation, or vain-glory. In truth he had preserved himself as the simple kindly creature that he was in the very beginning.

His old mother had refused to climb the social ladder with him, his dead wife had often been dizzy and uncomfortable as she made the ascent, only his children had felt at ease on the upper level. The son had married a 'lady of quality,' as such persons were once called. Kate, the eldest girl, had found a husband in a country baronet of vast landed possessions. Now Janet, John Chandler's youngest and dearest daughter, had just engaged herself to the eldest son of a peer.

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# GENERATIONS

*Janet put down her tea-cup with a sudden jerk and, clasping her hands, gripped them tightly. She felt a queer faintness or sickness.*

## W. B. MAXWELL

*illustrated by* ELIZABETH BARNSHAW

Janet would go into the peerage and feel quite at home there. In aspect this child of a third generation was exactly like the offspring who had ten or twenty generations behind them. Flower of a transplanted stock, she rivalled the prettiness, delicate colouring, slender graces of indigenous blossoms. Also she was like her well-bred and fashionable friends or playmates in much of her mind, but not all of it. She had a strength of character that as yet was quite undeveloped. She was frivolous but not altogether selfish. She wanted to be kind to others she meant to be, but did not always know how and when she knew sometimes shirked the task.

'All right daddy then I'll go too. Yes you must take me with you.'

She said this impulsively, seeing that there was a kind thing to do, and instantly determining to do it. She and her father were tremendously close friends. Indeed he was fonder of Janet than he had ever been of anybody on earth except his mother. The old mother had always stood first in his thoughts.

MRS. CHANDLER was enormously proud of her son, but his worldly success meant little to her. Nothing could induce her to profit by it. With means sufficient for her modest needs she remained in the North Country village by the moorside where she had spent her whole life, and no power could make her budge from it. She would not even let him give her a bigger and better house. If he sent her expensive presents she reproved him roundly for foolish extravagance, either returning the unsuitable gifts or contenting herself with a homily. For she often treated him, at fifty years of age, as though he were still a child.

She wrote to him frequently, and her letters warmed his heart because her deep love was in them, although she never attempted to give it expression. She spoke almost solely of local matters. 'Longstone Mill has been on half time since a month ago. Edward Hateson fell off a hayrick and broke his leg. That girl Eldridge's daughter that I had here to help Sarah has turned out very badly. I always thought she would. Did I tell you how she asked to sit in the gallery of the church instead of alongside of me in my two sittings, till I found out afterwards she never went up in the gallery at all, but off across the fields with one of the lads, and back in time to meet me at the door when I came out after the service.' And Mrs. Chandler in a few words would wind up by calling down blessings on Johnnie's family. "God keep you and yours in health and happiness, and may you get your desires, provided they do not infringe His eternal laws. Your loving affectionate mother.' She was very religious.

No matter how busy he was or how important might be the affairs that engaged his attention, John never failed to pay her regular visits.

He was about to visit her now, and although with much on his hands, to stay with her for five days, and Janet, at the height of the London season, with all sorts of gaiety and amusement in progress, repeated her intention of going with him.

'It's sweet of you,' said Sir John, smiling at her fondly across the breakfast table, 'but perhaps you had better not.' Plainly he was at once delighted by her offer and reluctant to avail himself of it.

Janet however insisted. Glancing out of the window at the trees in St. James's Park, she thought of the dancing and chattering and laughing and all the other metropolitan pleasures that she would miss in five long days, but she did not mind a bit. She was going to act rightly, becomingly, above all else *kindly*.

'Well, I warn you that you mayn't like it,' said her father. 'It will be—I mean comparatively—roughing it for you. Perhaps it will be more than you can stick.'

'Of course it won't,' and she reminded him that she had stayed there before.

'Yes,' he said, 'but you were younger then. And you had Andrew Lake to keep you company.'

Andrew Lake saw them off at Euston next day. He was the son of one of Chandler's early partners, himself doing well in the business, trusted and liked by Sir John, who often spoke of him with praise. He stood by the door of their compartment talking to his principal, but not taking the slightest notice of Janet. Once she spoke to him and he did not answer. When the train began to move he lifted his hat and looked at her austerely.

She smiled. He had been like this ever since the announcement of her betrothal. Ridiculous.

"Any messages for the old place?' Sir John called out.

'My duty to Mrs. Chandler,' said Andrew Lake, keeping up with the carriage for a moment or two. 'And love, of course, to Aunt Emily and Aunt Mabel.'

They arrived at the cottage, for it was no more than a cottage, about tea-time, and nothing could well have been more pleasant yet touching to see than the meeting of mother and son.

'My dear boy,' said Mrs. Chandler joyously, 'and my bonny Janet. Quick. Let me kiss you both again.'

She was white-haired, old but in spite of her years she carried herself strongly with her spare, trim figure erect as a girl's. Her eyes were keen and shrewd. She spoke kindly, in a voice which a little resembled that of the grey-haired, middle-aged man who regarded her with such love and reverence; but there was a sternness or severity about her that made the pretty fashionably-dressed girl inwardly quail. Already, after two minutes, Janet realized what she was up against. The visit would be a far bigger ordeal than she had anticipated.

Sarah the elderly servant brought in the tea, and Sir John talked to her as to a friend and equal. She called him Master John once, and again Janet thought it was touching. In his special honour Sarah had cooked some Yorkshire cakes.

'Your father likes 'em, miss, and I dare-say you don't get 'em up London way.'

'No, we don't, Sarah,' said Sir John cheerily. 'Nor your fine moorland air, nor the heather-fed bees that make that honey. Well, what d'you think of my girl?' he asked, much to his girl's embarrassment. 'It's four years since you've seen her.'

'Aye, but she's altered,' said Sarah, looking hard at her.

'For the better, I hope?' said Sir John, smiling.

Sarah chuckled. 'Handsome is as handsome does. That's a wise proverb. It's easy to turn young ladies' heads.' And nodding and chuckling, Sarah withdrew.

'The old girl seems full of bounce,' said John Chandler.

'No, but she's *not*, Johnnie,' said his mother. 'I'm anxious about her. The legs. Varicose veins. She's as brave as a lion and she won't give in. I'd be glad for you to look at her legs, the worst one. All blue and crimson it is sometimes.'

Janet put down her tea-cup with a sudden jerk and clasping her hands, gripped them tightly. She had felt a queer faintness or sickness. All at once, too, the little sitting-room had seemed to become oppressively hot.

After tea she left the other two to talk and went upstairs to her bedroom.

It was the room she had slept in four years ago, but it seemed altogether different, smaller, barer, uglier. And she had not remembered its smell: a mixture of common household soap and very dry lavender. Over the bed there were some decorated texts, and on the painted deal table with the crochet mat by the bedside, and there, rather ostentatiously, was a large Bible. Her two leather suit-cases stood on the floor.

She went to the window and looked out. It was not an enlivening view in any direction. A stone bridge where the river, its waters stained by chemicals, ran under the road, the long street with houses built mostly of dark stone, beyond these some high chimneys and the roofs of the cloth mills, and on the hillside narrow paved lanes and rows and rows of the close-packed workmen's dwellings: all of it looked dismal, sad, desolate even in the gentle summer sunlight.

THEN Sarah tapped at the bedroom door, wishing to know if she could be of use to "missie."

'Well,' said Janet, 'will you, like a great dear, unpack for me?'

"Unpack"! Oh, surely,' said the old servant, but evidently surprised by the request. One after another she put the suit-cases on the bed. "Now will you give me the keys.'

"They're not locked", and Janet laughed with an affectation of gaiety, and tried to cheer herself by luring Sarah to an amusing chat.

It was no good. Sarah was too dour, too forbidding—or perhaps her poor old dreadful legs hurt her. Then unexpectedly she gave a chuckle that developed into a hearty laugh.

"I bin looking for the nightdress and thinking yer clever maids had left it out. But, eh, ah a-am I t' b'lieve these are what ye wear at night?'

'Yes, Sarah, you have guessed it in once.'

Sarah was spreading the gawdy satin pyjamas over the bed, touching them with her bony hands, laughing at them, mocking at them.

'Pon m' word. What next? Who'd ever think of such a travesty—but all the fashion, I'm be bound.'

Janet descended to the ground floor and heard the happy voices of granny and daddy. Not wanting to disturb them she went out to the tiny garden in front of the house.

She felt miserable, forlorn, and every moment her spirits sank a little lower. The visit, too evidently, would test her fortitude and powers of resistance. Yet last time things had been all right. She had loved those two or three days in the different atmosphere, the strange surroundings, going about with Andrew Lake, who, though so much older, brought himself down to the level of her seventeen years, and was a wonderful companion. She thought of their expeditions over the moor, their picnic luncheon miles away, the fishing in the river, the evening rambles. Andrew was great fun, and they had become real friends. And since that remote period of her youth and ignorance she had kept friends, always

being jolly to him, indeed, allowing him to take great liberties, to lecture her accusing her of staidness, and say she ought to take up social interests. These easy terms had continued until lately when he had chosen to turn huffy and stuffy with her.

Thinking of Andrew Lake made her think of his two elderly aunts Mrs. Giles and Miss Barrett, and on the impulse of the moment she decided to pay them an immediate call. They lived at the far end of the street, and without troubling to get her hat she went there passing on her way a queer little draper's shop that she looked at intently. It had a family interest for her.

Midway up the street she began to meet workpeople. She had heard a bell and the ugly noise of steam whistles that announced the end of another day's labour at the mills. Men, women and girls with tired faces came slowly past her, and at a corner of one of the narrow roads she heard something that affected her oddly. It was the unmistakable sound of clogs on the cobblestones. Once all the women used to wear clogs, but nowadays only a few of the older ones still used them, in summer as well as winter, from mere habit, possibly.

Elegant graceful Janet listened to the sound and stood for a minute at least staring at a group of workers as they mounted the hillside and disappeared one after another into those dark grim cottages. She thought that her own ancestors used to be people just like that, here or somewhere else. Granny's husband starting the emergence from manual toil, had prospered in that small draper's shop—the name was still over the door "late Chandler." Granny's mother was a work-girl who had died young. Great-grandfather Chandler had been goodness knows what. But his sisters probably had clattered and pattered over the stones and mud in their wooden clogs.

Aunt Emily and Aunt Mabel received Miss Chandler very kindly, and opened a bottle of home-made wine to do her honour.

"When did you last see Andrew?"

"This morning," said Janet, very bright and smiling, as she sipped the unpalatable syrup. "He sent his love."

"Bless him. He couldn't have found anyone nicer or prettier to carry it for him. Could he, Mabel?"

"No, indeed," said Mabel. "That's the luggage Miss Janet ought to carry—love—and nothing heavier or more difficult."

"And I hope Sir John is in good health," said Aunt Mabel. "Oh, but he has been good to Andrew."

"Sir John thinks the world of Andrew," said Aunt Emily. "That's correct, isn't it, Miss Chandler?"

"Please call me Janet—as you always used to."

"Thank you. We'd like to. Well then, Janet, nice, kind, dear girl, you knew of course, that we're expecting dear Andrew here for his holiday."

"No, I didn't know—at least, I don't remember him saying so."

"Oh, yes, as soon as your kind father gives him leave, we shall have the dear boy. But no doubt Sir John leans on him and finds it difficult to spare his services."

"Yes, daddy does rely on him a great deal."

SHE went home to her grandmother's house, and after a time they had supper.

The meal comprised cold meat, pickles, sliced beetroot in a glass dish, with the unusual addition of hot potatoes, specially cooked by Sarah to gratify the guests. No coffee followed, and Janet dared not smoke a cigarette.

She felt ready to cry. Her distress was not caused by the poor food or the dreadful bedroom, but rather by the disruptive sense of having tumbled out of her proper world into this scene of grim toil and ugly necessitousness, and a most worse was the realization that to this kind of scene, and to none other, they had all belonged such a little while ago. Three generations. She was herself only twice removed from it. The thought did not mortify her, it saddened and confused her. Nevertheless she played her part at the supper table and afterwards becomingly, being very sweet all through, kissing grandmamma whenever required, and finally supporting the poignant discomforts of a most troublesome conversation.

For late on this first evening of the visit, old Mrs. Chandler talked to her about herself, saying what a big girl she had grown, and so on. Then came an inquiry as to whether she had a sweetheart, one of whom her father approved. Janet gave a shy affirmative.

John Chandler laughed. "I don't know that my approval makes much difference. These young people don't ask for our approval nowadays, mother, they settle it among themselves."

But the old lady bristled and spoke angrily. "Oh, I don't agree with that at all. I don't want to hear any of that rubbish talked. Young people must be dutiful to their parents." Then she softened, and turned to Janet with a sort of stern kindness. "Who's the young man, my dear?"

Janet said deprecatingly that his name was Frank Amberley.

"Amberley? I never heard the name. Are his parents living?"

*"Tell me, Frank," said Janet. "If it happened, if we were ruined, would you mind?"*

Janet said yes, and added as if apologizing, that he was the son of Lord and Lady Durnsford.

The old dame tossed her head and frowned, but then once more relaxed. "Oh, yes, very grand, I'm sure," and she seemed to meditate for a few moments. "But all said and done, I think it's a good deal better for young women to look for husbands in their own class."

Sir John again laughed. "She thinks he is in her own class, mother."

"Oh, stuff and nonsense," said Mrs. Chandler. And she continued firmly, saying in effect that though by reason of wealth Johnnie's family had pulled themselves up and puffed themselves out, they were just as far off those grand folk as they had ever been. "And what's more, *they* don't think otherwise. They value your money, not you. Oh, no doubt they're very polite to you, but when it comes to *mixing* with them you are only like all the servants brought in for a Christmas dance, and the lords and ladies dancing with them."

All this was very painful to Janet. It chimed in worryingly with some of her recent thoughts. When at last she fell asleep between the coarse sheets of the hard bed it mingled with her dreams.

Next morning her father saw that the visit was too much for her. "You can't stand it," he said suddenly. "Well, my dear, I'd best make an excuse and send you back to London."

Janet insisted that she would stay for the five days. She said it was all right. But Chandler saw that it was all wrong, and declared that she had better go. Then Janet, very much upset, said she felt so wretched about everything. "Daddy, won't you think me horrid if I go?"

"No," he said, "it's quite natural," and before noon he drove her to the station in a hired car, and sent her off.

Oh, the relief! Before dinner-time she was back in her proper world, with the quiet splendours of Carlton Gardens surrounding her. She breathed again.

Immediately she telephoned to her betrothed, reporting her return and asking him to come to her.

"Yes, Frank, you simply must take me out to-night."

Young Mr. Frank Amberley said he was pledged to dine with a party of friends at a restaurant, but he was sure that they would be too delighted for words if Janet could join them, and he spoke of the hostess and others. They were to dine quite late.

"I'll ring up Gladys," said Janet, excitedly, "and if she says yes, I'll be there."

Gladys St. John, the evening's hostess, vowed that she would be enraptured to see her dearest Janet at the feast.

"Glorious," said Janet, gaily, "I shall simply love it. It's just what I wanted—for I am rather down on my luck."

"You poor dear. Not because of Frank. He hasn't been giving trouble, has he?"

"Oh, no," said Janet, carelessly. "Frank is free from blame as ever. Something altogether different."

That fashionably popular haunt, the Café de Milan, was quite at its best this evening, not too crowded with floor space on which one could dance comfortably. Some of the dresses were marvellous. Here and there at the small tables interesting men and women gave one an opportunity for discreet whispers. Gladys St. John's party had a table by the wall, from which one had a good view of everything, and they formed a happy chattering group of pretty girls and pleasant young men. Janet Chandler laughed incessantly, talked unweariyingly, throwing herself into all the fun and trying hard to enjoy herself to the very uttermost. But somehow things were not altogether satisfactory.

Irrelevant thoughts assailed her in the midst of the bright lights and the gay music. Her seat was on the sofa side of the table with her back to the wall, and as she looked at the animated scene in front of her she winced inwardly. Coloured lights, great mirrors, gold and crystal flowers, wine, men with white shirts, women with naked backs: what would granny say to such customs and extravagances? Disgusting? And Janet thought of the grim moorside village, its cobble-stones, its workgirls. The only evening entertainment possible for those tired girls would be the poor little cinema, and its second-class worn-out films. Their sweethearts might take them to it. And to-morrow at six they must be ready to start another day's work.

"Let's dance," she said abruptly to Frank, sitting beside her on the sofa.

They danced and danced. More people were beginning to come in for supper. The floor began to be thronged. But Janet would not stop. She felt a growing excitement, and yet with it there was an enervation, as if she had become overwrought.

At last they went back to their table, and as Janet sat fanning herself with a menu card, she laughed rather harshly. A queer fancy had come to her. She and Frank were alone there for some minutes, the others all having newly taken the floor.

"Listen, Frank. I have weighty matters to impart."

"Fire ahead," and he looked at her smilingly. He was fair-haired, blue-eyed,

so young as to seem almost infantile The only things about him that could suggest maturity were his perfect manners and his well bred self-composure

You know, said Janet "many critics declare that we Chandlers have only our money to recommend us We are not *grand* at least, not now We came over with the Conqueror, of course Chandler was then Chandelier, le Sieur Chandelier one of William's right-hand men

'Oh, really?'

'No, not really and with a laugh she went on talking in this odd style 'No, we were quite humble people I have just been visiting the cradle of our race My great-grandmother was a work girl and went about in wooden clogs'

Really?'

"Yes, clogs Do you know what they are?'

'No, but I have often heard them spoken of Weren't they things worn on the head?'

'No, on the feet But this is my point Frank We rose from nothing, and I shouldn't be a bit surprised if we went back to nothing'

"Really How?"

She laughed, and spoke unnaturally

'I mean that daddy might lose all his money and go smash I think that's quite possible.'

Oh, really?'

'Can't you say anything but Really? It gets on my nerves.

'Really? I beg your pardon Yes, you do seem rather jumpy But you were saying about your father I'm terribly sorry to hear that things are wrong with him

'Are you Frank?" And she looked at him queerly 'Tell me If it happened, if we were ruined, would you mind?"

"I don't follow

'I mean would you still want me?"

Then she saw that she had offended him badly He flushed and spoke very stiffly 'Are you suggesting that I am marrying you for your money?

'No, only a joke." She too, had flushed She was ashamed of her silliness, and tried by laughing to hide her embarrassment 'Noble Frank, you have stood the test My father is all right financially—going strong"

'Oh really?" said Frank in a stiff and distant tone, for he was still huffed "Very funny, and all that, but I don't like leg-pulling as a pastime'

'Forgive me, Frank and she looked at him piteously "You are a great dear But, oh, how I wish you were older I wish we were both of us older, and she sighed

For a little while she felt utterly miserable Why? It was unreasonable, absurd But that visit had completely upset her

The restaurant was getting too full More and more people arrived, many of them from the theatres, Tables, hurriedly brought forward encroached upon the polished floor Janet danced, but in the press dancing was now a mere rhythmic shuffle.

ALL at once she was reminded again of the dark moorside and the long village street Andrew Lake had come in, accompanied by two women, one elderly and the other young Janet recognized his younger companion as a clerk or typist from her father's offices, a girl called Nicholson, who had been to the house several times for some secretarial task She felt an odd sort of displeasure Miss Nicholson was certainly not up to Andrew's mark in dress, aspect, or social position Why should he so condescend?

She soon made an opportunity of speaking to him With an air that she endeavoured not to make patronizing, she greeted and shook hands with Miss Nicholson. The older person was Miss Nicholson's mother They said that Mr Lake had taken them to a play and brought them on here to see life. A great treat because they had never before been to such a place. And kind Mr Lake had done this kindness only just because he heard it was the girl's birthday

"How nice of him" said Janet "Andrew give me a dance presently

He said yes, but did not seem gratified, and a longish time passed before he came across to Janet's table She looked up smiling, and rose at once. He was tall and dark good looking in the opinion of some people, with hair beginning to grow thin on his high forehead although he could not, as Janet knew be more than thirty-three As she knew also, he was able to be pleasant enough when he wished to make himself agreeable but to-night he once more refused to resume the old easy, friendly tone that he had not long ago abandoned His manner towards her was cold and bleak as the moorside on a winter's day He seemed to imply that he only danced with her because she was his employer's daughter and he considered her invitation an order that he must in duty obey

'I saw your aunts, Andrew"

'Oh did you? I shall see them myself soon

Yes, so they said

Then they danced in silence Evidently he would not put himself to the trouble of making conversation. She began again.

It is jolly to find you here, Andrew—but a surprise to see you with Miss Nicholson. I had no idea that you and she were such particular friends.

"We are not particular friends," he said, as if bored by the remark or resenting it. 'But she has been working for me this last month.'

"Oh. Merely philanthropy—the birthday treat. and Janet laughed softly. 'No deeper or more tender meaning? I thought that perhaps I ought to get ready to offer congratulations."

Again there was silence. as they shuffled round with the crowd in a slow fox-trot.

"I came back this evening," she said

'Yes, you didn't stay long down there.

'No. I—I was obliged to return—unexpectedly'

'Almost a pity you went, perhaps."

He said no more He ceased to look at her His eyes stared straight forward over her shoulder, and his darkened face had an expression as severe as old Mrs. Chandler's. From head to feet he was disapproval incarnate

'Thank you so much, Andrew—but I don t think I want any more. Yes, I'll stop, please. Good-night

During the next two days she was quite wretched. It was as if her world had crumbled and she wandered, lost and helpless, among shattered haunts and the ruins of old amusements. Her friends could neither aid nor guide her

She thought of all those bright young people with unabated regard and affection, but felt for the first time in her life that there was "not enough to them," as her father sometimes used to say about business associates. Their instincts were nearly always good and fine, but so little ever came of it all Boys and girls. at their very nicest, they were essentially so empty, so futile The girls were formed on one charming pattern. all alike they never attempted to be different, they acted and thought mechanically as they had been trained to do And the nice young men, all decent, kindly well-intentioned would be quite hopeless if thrown on their own resources Everything was done for them. Their careers had been settled while they were still at school. At the appointed time they were pushed into the Army, the City Parliament, without the slightest effort of their own. To the end of their days they were no more than grown-up children And Janet thought suddenly that perhaps only the self-made men nowadays are real men

But her quarrel was with herself, not with her companions

She reproached herself most bitterly for her feeble behaviour three days ago She *ought* to have stuck it. It was degrading not to stick it after she had vowed that she would. 'I'm just a snob," she thought. "and a cad, too.' Shame overwhelmed her as she thought of how she had failed her father If she had not gone there with him it wouldn't have mattered but, as it was. she had more than disappointed him. She had wounded him too. 'A pity you went That was what Andrew Lake said at once. It was cruelly true. Andrew had understood

And that it should be she of all people to act so unworthily! Not the descendant of a hundred earls, but the child of toilers and strivers. It was mean, pitiful. a denial of one's own kind a betraying of one's very blood With these thoughts she seemed to hear again, faint, then clear, the sound of the wooden clogs. That sound symbolized the past history of her race. It was heard through the mists of time, a footstep of nameless ancestors, a clatter and a patter made by her family ghosts

*"Anyhow, your opinion, good or bad, is of no value to me," said Janet*

In the daytime she was daunted by the sound. At night, on this fourth night since her return to London, she heard it in a dream, loud, threatening, not to be escaped. That was a preposterous yet horrible dream of hers. She had been brought before a vague, shadowy but most dreadful tribunal, and was being judged, and finally condemned. Her judges said that she was to wear clogs for the remainder of her life, so that wherever she went the noise she made should tell people that she was the proud bad girl who had disgraced herself.

In the morning she laughed when she thought of the dream, and yet she could not shake off the memory of its pain and distress.

Among her letters there was one from Sir John.

Her father told her that he would return to-day, as arranged, because he was absolutely compelled to do so, but he felt very much worried about it, and hated leaving his mother in the circumstances that had arisen. The old servant, Sarah, had cracked up and been removed to the cottage infirmary. They had not, unfortunately, been able to get in a decent girl to replace her. A charwoman, however, came to work for the day, but old Mrs. Chandler was left alone at night. That kind Miss Barrett and her sister would look after the poor old soul as much as they could. Sarah's unlucky legs would keep her incapacitated for at least a fortnight.

Janet read the letter twice, and then, set in motion by a very strong impulse, sprang up from the breakfast table.

That same evening there were not many passengers in the ancient motor omnibus that came from the railway junction, lumbering and rattling over the moor and onward down the valley. When it stopped in the village street only one person got out. She was a young woman, neatly but far from grandly dressed, and she carried all her luggage, a small suit-case, in her hand. With a sedate business-like air she walked briskly away over the bridge, and along the road, until she came to an ugly little slate-roofed house.

She entered it without knocking on the door or ringing the bell, and deposited her suit-case in the narrow passage.

"Who's that?" said an elderly voice.

Old Mrs. Chandler, sitting alone in the parlour, had a heavy religious book on her knees, but had stopped reading and was meditating. Startled, she rose from her chair and repeated the question. "Who's there? Who is it?"

"It's I, Janet," said the girl, opening the parlour door. "Granny, darling, I have come to stay with you, and be your servant, until Sarah gets well."

AND this time she stuck it. It was her punishment, her penance, her expiation, and she would have died rather than fail to go through with it. The achievement, considering the difficulties and her total inexperience, was really creditable. If she had needed any reward the enraptured letters from her father would have given it to her. But truly what she wanted was to rehabilitate herself in her own mind. That was the essential aim.

She had brought an alarm clock with her, and every morning at six its shrill scream tore her out of bed. Six was the time for all the other workers to begin. When the charwoman arrived the house was a going concern. This good creature acted as instructress, and was loath to see the young lady performing the most menial offices. But Janet insisted. In the forenoon one or other of Andrew's aunts came, and during the first four days taught and helped with the cooking. But at the end of a week Janet required no further help of any sort. She had become quite efficient, and was doing nearly all the charwoman's work as well as her own.

At night she slept dreamlessly, falling into the long gentle oblivion with a final comfortable glow of virtuous self-respect. When the alarm screamed she woke laughing. It was all great fun really—and very good for the health. As she told granny, she felt as strong as several horses.

Not sparing herself in physical labours, she would not let herself off mental discipline either.

Of course she regularly visited the poor invalid at the infirmary, and one afternoon when she was on the point of leaving Sarah said that the nurse was coming to dress her legs, and if Janet cared to stay she could see them.

Janet quailed. She felt like a pilgrim at Lourdes. But in spite of her shivering reluctance she stood firm.

"Yes, Sarah," she said rather faintly. "I—I will," and she went on with recovered brightness. "A lucky chance. It's time I had a look at your legs. You know I missed seeing them when daddy was here."

ON the first day of his holiday Andrew Lake was out and about early, long before breakfast-time. It was a lovely clear morning, with the hillside aglow. The white smoke of wood fires rose high and straight through the warm still air.

As he noticed at a little distance, there was smoke from the chimney of Mrs. Chandler's house. Drawing near the garden gate he stopped and stood watching and listening. He had heard the sound of wooden clogs on the flag-stones at the side of the house. Then he heard the windlass of the well at the back. Presently the clogs sounded again, and Miss Chandler in a blue overall came with a pail of water round the corner of the house to the front door. Going down on all fours there, she scrubbed the flat white steps vigorously.

"Hullo, Andrew, is that you!" and remaining on her knees she continued scrubbing.

He watched her with a doubtful puzzled air, and presently talked to her critically and dourly about this second visit of hers. His aunts naturally had told him of all she was doing. It struck him, he said, as unnecessary and rather foolish, a masquerade, an ostentatious display, a parading of simulated virtues.

Janet rose from her knees then. Her pretty face was red, her lips quivered. She spoke crisply.

"Oh, you would have something horrid to say about it or you wouldn't be you, Andrew. Of course I can't do right, can I? Anyhow, your opinion, good or bad, is of no value to me. I'm not Miss Nicholson."

"Janet! I didn't mean . . . I beg your pardon."

But with flushing cheeks and angry eyes she turned from him to pick up the pail. Next minute she had gone pattering round

to the back of the house Contrite and perturbed he looked hard at the beautifully white doorstep.

In the afternoon he came to tender further explanations and apologies. He was so very sorry that he had offended her But she cut him short, saying it didn t matter it was of no consequence and so forth

"Well to show that I m forgiven, will you come for a walk with me after tea?"

"I can't," she said. 'It's not my evening out Get someone else,' and she laughed.

They had a few walks, however on other evenings since old Mrs Chandler begged her to get a little air and exercise. Together they rambled over the almost forgotten paths on the hillside, and by the river Once they went a long way across the moor to look for the spot where they had had their picnic

WEEKS passed Sarah would soon be able to resume work, and then the amateur servant could be set free Grandmamma Chandler would miss her sadly For the old dame had softened and softened so greatly that tears came into her eyes when she thought of the girl's goodness.

"You re very sweet, Janet," she said, fondly, "a dear kind lassie And I wronged you in my heart Yes, I did—and I m right ashamed of it'

One evening, towards the very end she talked to Janet of the future.

'Tell me about your sweetheart dear Is he a fine lad?'

Janet said yes, he was as good as gold. Only he was very, very young and for that reason unformed, immature, slightly vacuous. With time of course he should improve and strengthen But at the moment one might think that there was nothing much to him.

'Oh Janet, how you speak!" Old Mrs. Chandler seemed shocked. 'So cold and grudging!'

"I thought you wanted to know the facts, granny"

'Janet said Mrs. Chandler, firmly, "with no more feeling and love than that, ye ought not to marry him'

"Well I m not going to."

"No?"

'No, granny I have broken it off since I was here"

Mrs Chandler said no more then She sat brooding. But before they went to bed she returned to the subject speaking very gently and kindly and yet with something sly or insinuating in her manner

'Janet about husbands—the right sort and the wrong sort! Have ye ever thought of Andrew Lake?"

'Yes, granny I m thinking of him now and from just that point of view'

# ACROSTICS

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No 243

Among the branches in the spring
You hear these songsters carolling.

1 This once a certain youth put in,
A taste of longed-for fruit to win.
2 Though welcome certainly to friends,
I nvelcome this from heaven descends.
3. Here you can look upon a Queen
In one of our Joinitions seen,
4 Sught increase of fit ocean cells
As before when the tempest swells.
5. Though pale within we see it bear
A boastful and pretentious air
6. A nation, on its way to find
A home, this mountain calls to mind.
7 Bubbling may be yet in vain
You think the wine might prove champagne
8 Just twist a drain about and see
It just as low as it can be
9 Footsteps are sometimes this, and you
May so style the pursuers too

W J. B.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 241

Thus makes no profit, that pays through the nose
Between them stands the worker of heir woes

1. This sort of victory often means defeat.
2. Ha f animal is here, or cash complete
3. A short-lived town that saw fanatic's doom.
4. Dire straits, of sanguine Br tish hopes the tomb,
5. Modest with haughty dynasty removed,
6 By members of the feline race approved,
7 This rhymes with number six, and should be last.
8. If you behead his wanderer, all is past.

W B.

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| 1 | P | verb | C |
| 2 | R | hin | O |
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| 8. | R | ove | H |

NOTES,—Light 2 Rhinoceros. 5. Unassuming.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 242.

Are you anxious to guess
The solution with speed
Well The first you possess
And the last means in deed.
To solvers hat clamour
Pray, who can this be?
Regardless of grammar,
I murmur "It's me"

1 She skims the waves with wings of white.
2 This burn recalls a border fight
3. A bird of prey comes into sight
4. Such lions bring revolts to light.
5. Exorbitate the end is bright

SILEX.

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NOTES —Light 2. Otterburn, or Chevy Chase, 388.
4. Rebellions. 5. Ray

# THE MAN WITH SAMPLES

By 'SAPPER'

"CAN you spare a few minutes, Bob? Two heads are better than one, and, maybe, you'll be able to see a way out."

I had not seen Ronald Standish for some weeks, and as I put down the morning paper I saw he was looking worried.

"As many as you like," I said. "But if you can't solve the problem I'm not likely to be much good."

"It's nothing to do with solving a problem this time, old boy," he answered. "At least not in the way you mean. By Jove," he burst out savagely, "there ought to be a law passed allowing one to shoot a blackmailer on sight!"

"So that's it, is it?" I cried. "Nobody getting at you, is there?"

"Not guilty, Bob," he said with a grin. He grew serious again.

"Do you know Archie Maitland?"

"Sir Archibald Maitland, Bart? Yes, I know him slightly. Just got engaged to one of the Sussex girls."

"That's the bird," said Ronald. "And have you ever heard me speak of a man who calls himself Richard Mordon?"

"Can't say I have. Who is he?"

Richard Mordon, amongst other things, is one of those kind-hearted philanthropists who will lend you any sum from five pounds to ten thousand on note of hand alone. He trades under the name of John Grant and Co. His real name I have forgotten, but his parents were Polish Jews who settled in England where their precious offspring was born. He therefore speaks the language like a native. He has an office in the City, and lives in a house not far from Sevenoaks. I'll tell you more about that house later.

To return to Mordon. I said, if you remember, amongst other things. The gentleman, besides being the most rapacious bloodsucker in London so far as his rates of interest are concerned, has a very paying sideline. It is one that he handles with great discretion, since a mistake would involve his being kept at His Majesty's expense for several years. He conducts it entirely from his private house, keeping the moneylending business quite separate. And the sideline is this. He is prepared to buy any incriminating document which he considers worth his while.

"Setting to work with, I am bound to say, considerable skill, he let it be known amongst valets and ladies' maids that any compromising letters they chose to bring to him would be well paid for. And not being a damned fool he *does* pay well. He gets it back a hundred times over. And the result is that many a damning letter has found its way into Mordon's safe.

"Then comes the next step—blackmailing the writers. And here Mordon again shows his devilish cunning. He seems to possess an almost uncanny flair for squeezing the maximum out of his victims, without overstepping the mark and asking the impossible. Knowing human nature, he realizes that by so doing he is far more likely to get the money. Of course, there have been cases when Mordon has suggested the advantages of borrowing money from John Grant and Co. and has thereby got it both ways, but

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*JACK M. FAULKS*

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as a general rule he touches them for just what they can pay and no more

"You seem to know a good deal about the swine," I said

"I do," answered Ronald. "Four or five times have he and I crossed swords, and I regret to state he has won on every occasion. You see, the devil of it is, Bob, that with a blackmailer one is helpless. The police are helpless. Unless the victim will move, nothing can be done. And that's where this blackguard is so astute. He never touches a case which concerns one individual only; there is always someone else implicated. Since ninety per cent of his cases concern love affairs the man has to think of the woman's reputation. What he specializes in is the case where

*"'Do you recognize this letter?' asked Mordon. He held up a sheet of paper, and Archie stared at it stupefied. It was in the girl's handwriting"*

a real scandal would ensue if the facts came out And that is the state of Denmark so far as Archie Maitland is concerned My hat Bob,' he added, despairingly, 'why are people such drivelling half wits as to write compromising letters, and then to qualify still further for a lunatic asylum by leaving them lying about? However—to continue

"Two years ago Archie had a love affair with a girl who must be nameless, even to you He was quite frank about it and while it lasted it was evidently pretty hectic Then as has been known to happen before, the thing fizzled out, and a year ago the girl got married to a man some fifteen years older than herself They are ideally happy, and a child is expected shortly

'Now we come to the point. A week ago Mordon rang up Archie as he was dressing for dinner Archie of course, didn't know from Adam who he was, and when Mordon suggested that he should come down and visit him at Sevenoaks Archie told him to go to the devil Then Mordon mentioned the girl's name, which gave Archie such a jolt that he could only stutter foolishly He'd almost forgotten the affair himself so how on earth could this complete stranger know anything about it? However he evidently did, and so Archie made an appointment to go down and see him the following evening

He found Mordon in the room in which he always transacts his business, and at first he thought he'd come to a mad house Immediately on his entering a large man of the professional pug type ran his hands over his pockets But it wasn't that which surprised him, in fact he hardly noticed it in his amazement at the rest of the preparations. Seated against the farther wall was the man he had come to see In front of him was a desk and let into the wall itself was a big safe the door of which stood open But the astounding thing was that a high openwork grille fenced him in completely, on the same principle that one sometimes sees in banks

Pardon these small precautions, Sir Archibald said the blackguard affably but I have a rooted objection to revolver bullets, or physical force in any form. So I prefer to conduct negotiations from inside of the grille. Our business will not take long. Do you recognize this letter

'He held up a sheet of paper and Archie stared at it stupefied It was in the girl's handwriting, and he could see that the address was that of her parents' house

"How the devil did you get hold of that?' he shouted

Mordon held up his hand

I must really beg of you to moderate your voice, Sir Archibald, he said. Such lack of control is shockingly bad for the digestion

The genuine Mordon touch, Bob the swine always talks like that

I see that you do remember he continued I don't wonder either it is not the sort of letter a man would forget A little indiscreet, perhaps—but very affectionate. Have you had another week-end in Paris with the lady?

I GATHER that at that point Archie went mad He cursed and swore at the sneering moneylender behind his desk he seized the steel bars of the grille and shook them and as he said to me if he had had a gun he'd have shot Mordon dead on the spot. It was perfectly true that he and the girl had spent a week-end in Paris but it had been quite innocent It had been on the occasion of the Davis Cup, and they had decided to go over and see it She had made a fictitious date with a girl friend for the benefit of her parents, and had then gone over by the midday boat He had flown And they had stayed at the same hotel though on different floors. Where was where the devil of it all came in What ever it was in reality it looked, on the face of it, just about as certain a cinch as could well be thought of

Archie pulled himself together and explained the facts to Mordon who began to laugh

Really Sir Archibald you pain me he said. Perhaps I had better refresh your memory as to some of the choicer phrases in the letter Passing lightly over the opening gambit of My own darling boy we arrive in a slowly increasing crescendo to the culminating statement that the memory of those two nights will be with me for the rest of my life

Mordon put down the letter

Now Sir Archibald as a man of the world, what would you understand by that sentence? I, of course, am only too relieved to hear that my unworthy suspicions are unfounded, but it is just possible that there are other people—the wife, the charming lady's husband who will not be so trusting

I gather Archie then went mad again but Mordon must be used to scenes like that

You can't, man' Archie yelled, you can't Don't you know she's going to have a baby very soon?

Yes I was aware of that fact said Mordon placidly And it was in anticipation of such an occurrence taking place that I have held up this letter until now It has I think you will admit a somewhat higher market value at the present time than it would have had a few months ago

Any severe shock might be very prejudicial to her health. And,' continued this super swine, 'there is one other little point that I would like you to bear in mind, Sir Archibald. I realize that matters being as they are at the moment it is more than likely that her husband would keep things to himself at any rate, until it is all over. So that in the regrettable necessity of my having to send this letter to him, a copy will go by the same post to the lady with a covering note informing her who has the original.'

'To cut a long story short,' went on Ronald, 'Archie had by this time twigged what he was up against and demanded Morton's price. It is forty thousand pounds.'

'Great Scott!' I cried. 'Forty thousand! It's iniquitous.'

'Morton is iniquitous.'

'Can Maitland pay it?'

'He can and will, unless we can think of a way out. It's a big sum even for him, but he's a wealthy man, and sooner than run the slightest risk of upsetting the woman in any way he is going to ante up. He regards the whole thing as being his fault in not tearing up the letter.'

'How did this man Morton get hold of it?'

'On that point Archie's not sure, though he thinks it must have been through a valet that he sacked on the spot about a year ago. Anyway, Bob, how he got it doesn't really matter. He has got it. And for the life of me I can't think of any way out.'

'When has the money to be paid by?'

'This day week,' said Ronald savagely. 'God! Bob, I'd give five thousand pounds to outwit that devil!'

'Is there any use in going to the police?'

'Not an earthly. What can they do? In a blackmail case the only way of employing the police is for the victim to provide by some means the blackmailer into a room where the police are hidden. Archie has no chance of inveigling Morton anywhere except that side of his business is done in his own house. There's another thing that makes it impossible too. Even supposing we could get the police to take action we should be precipitating the very catastrophe which Archie wants at all costs to avoid. It might be kept as Mr. X. and Mr. Y. in the papers, but the husband is bound to find out.'

'Well, my definite advice, old boy, is that Maitland should go at once to the husband and make a clean breast of it. You say he's a decent fellow.'

Ronald nodded.

'Quite. Though I don't know how he'd take it. He has—how shall I put it—distinctly old-fashioned ideas. Anyway, there's no good thinking about it, Bob. Archie has absolutely made up his mind on the subject, and nothing will move him. Sooner than do that he will stump up the forty thousand.'

Ronald began pacing up and down the room.

'I'd do anything,' he said, 'anything criminal, even, to beat that devil. But he's so cursedly clever. I swear that it is easier to get into Buckingham Palace than into his house. Every downstair window is covered with steel bars, and at the slightest suspicious sound they let loose a mastiff that is the size of a donkey.'

'You have been down there, then?'

'For the last three nights trying to see if there's a possible chance of breaking in. Though what good one would do if one did I don't know. Even if I got into the holy of holes, what then?' said Ronald. 'There's this grille to get through before you even begin to come to the safe.'

'Pretty risky, old boy. It would be pure and simple burglary.'

He looked me quietly in the face.

'I'd risk it, Bob. Risk it every time. If I thought it had the smallest chance of being successful. I'd stick at nothing to do him down.'

'If only there was some way of getting into the house, legitimately, so to speak. Through the front door, I mean. Then perhaps one might do something. But it's like entering a Masonic Lodge. I was hiding close by last night when a visitor arrived—evidently a manservant with something to sell. He rang the bell, and after a time the door, still on the chain, was cautiously opened a few inches, and the visitor was inspected. I heard him say, "I've got some samples I want to show your master," and after another prolonged inspection the man was admitted. That is clearly the open sesame, but it doesn't seem to help much unless you *have* got some samples. This fellow evidently had. I saw him counting notes under the lamp-post by the gate after he'd come out ten minutes later.'

'Just an idea, Ronald,' I said. 'Probably perfectly useless. Would it be impossible to get a search warrant?'

He shook his head.

'Quite,' he answered. 'No magistrate would sign one. And even if the police did manage to get one, what chance would they have of finding anything? Letters are very easily hidden, and they are his stock-in-trade. During the delay that would inevitably occur before they reached his room anything incriminating would have completely disappeared. No, bluff is the only thing. But how can we bluff?'

"Couldn't run him for being in possession of stolen property? After all, that letter was stolen from Maitland.

Ronald stood still and stared at me.

"It's an amazing thing, Bob," he said at length, "but do you know that that aspect of the case had not occurred to me? You're perfectly right. That letter is just as much stolen property as diamonds received by a fence. But—does it help us? Even to search a well-known fence's house the stolen goods have got to be traced to him. And it would be impossible in the case of that letter. Quite impossible. But—but——"

He paused, and suddenly the most extraordinary change came over his face.

"Bob," he yelled, "you blinking genius! And to think that all these long years I have misjudged you!"

He snatched up his hat and dashed out, hurling a Parthian shaft from the door.

"Make no engagements. Stand by till I ring you up."

MR RICHARD MORDAUNT was feeling at peace with the world. A sense of well-being pervaded his entire system. With one hand he was warming a glass of old brandy, in the other he held a Corona Corona. He had dined to his complete satisfaction. In honour of the occasion he had allowed himself a pint of Perrier Jouet. The shaded lights gleamed on the panelled table. The flames from a log fire—it was distinctly chilly for so early in September—flickered in the grate.

Inside that day had been good. John Grant and Co., the old-established Scotch house, had received their usual well-known sporting peer (who lives at the Ritz with wealthy but mean bachelors), and the head of a big margarine business formed the main catch.

Not a bad haul, taking it all the way round, especially the margarine entrant. It would be many years before that young man got off the hook. But if these young fools would go getting heavily in debt over some wretched chorus girl then they deserved to be taught the error of their ways. In fact, as Mr Mordaunt sipped his brandy a gust of acute annoyance spread over him. He was a prude where the seduction of a young girl and his lack of scruples in making business methods suit the welfare and prosperity of the City mainly baffled him.

The door opened softly, and Mr Mordaunt looked up. A pimply youth was standing on the mat and was staring at him with a furtive air.

"Well——" said Mr Mordaunt.

"Knowing your instructions, sir," began the youth.

"Shut the door," said Mr Mordaunt curtly, "and come in. And be brief."

The youth obeyed.

"I again took the housemaid out to tea," he continued. "The nurse has already arrived, and the doctor is visiting her ladyship twice a day."

"You reported that before," said Mr Mordaunt, irritably. "Anything fresh?"

"Yes, sir. The youth took a few steps forward and became confidential. "Communications, sir—they're afraid of complications. His lordship is terribly worried."

"You're sure of that?"

"It's the talk of the servants' hall."

"When is it expected?"

"In a week or ten days, sir, but now they don't seem so sure. May be earlier."

Mr Mordaunt examined the ash on his cigar.

"All right. That will do. Tell Mr Benjamin to give you five pounds."

He waved the youth out of the room and once again contemplated his cigar. Complications excellent. That made his position even stronger, in case Sir Archibald attempted to haggle.

He glanced at his watch—nine o'clock. In another hour his man would be arriving. And then forty thousand pounds to cap the labours of the day.

He refilled his glass with brandy. Assuredly life was good. Mr Mordaunt knew it was good. He felt it in every fibre of his being. And why was it good? Simply because he possessed the gift of making it so. Other people who specialized in his—er—line were stupid. They spoiled the ship for a ha'porth of tar. They didn't pay their informants well. At least "informants" was the wrong word: those people who had interesting information to sell in the interest of public morality—that was a better way of putting it. That man, for instance—Sir Archibald's valet—what was his name? The man who had brought him the letter. James Fulton—that was it. Fifty pounds had been the price he had paid the fellow. A big sum. Some men he knew would have tried to fost him off with a fiver. Richard Mordaunt did not do business on those lines. Hence the goods—the real goods. And it paid—paid every time. None of your messy little suburban scandals for him, but the big stuff.

Again the door opened—this time it was Mr Benjamin.

"It's O.K. about that fiver, Benjamin," said Mr Mordaunt.

But Mr Benjamin closed the door and advanced into the room.

"A man with samples, sir," he said quietly. "He asked me to give you this

*Mordon rose and came through the grille into the room.*
*"Here's the letter," said Belman.*

envelope as a proof of his *bona fides*. He said also that he heard about you from Fu ton. Sir Archibald Maitland's late valet."

Mr Mordon took the envelope and glanced at it. It had been opened and was empty.

'The Earl of Bletcheley, Upper Bruton Street, W.' he read out thoughtfully. "And a coronet on the back. Where are the contents?"

Those, sir, are the samples. Belman—that is the name of the earl's valet—thinks they may interest you. They are in his pocket at present."

The eyes of the two men met, and Mr Benjamin nodded slightly.

Very good, Benjamin. I will see this man. I will ring when I am ready, as usual, and should, by any chance, Sir Archibald Maitland arrive before I have finished, ask him to be good enough to wait a few moments.'

Mr Mordon made his way in leisurely fashion up the stairs to his office, feeling a glow of pleasurable anticipation. He did not know the writing on the envelope, but it was clearly feminine. Moreover, since it was in an educated hand, the writer, presumably, in view of the coronet, belonged to the peerage. It was not a question of a servant borrowing notepaper. Which was all very, very good. The day was closing in a positive blaze of glory.

He took his keys from his pocket and opened the door of the grille surrounding his desk. Then, picking up a copy of Debrett's, he sat down.

'Bletcheley, Earl of. Arthur George, 10th Earl. b. April 4th, 1900.'

His eye skimmed down the page.

'm. 1931, Lady Jane Mayhew, dau. of 5th Duke of Wessex.'

So he was thirty-three years old and recently married.

'Seat, Grantchester Towers, Yorkshire. Clubs, Marlborough, Turf.'

MR MORDON closed the book. All very satisfactory so far, but there was one vital thing to find out—a thing not mentioned in that august tome. How stood Lord Bletcheley's finances?

From a drawer in his desk he extracted a small black book, which he opened at a section marked B. Methodical in all his ways, Mr Mordon always made a note of the real financial condition of any celebrity or well-known man, if such information should happen to come his way. (Bitter experience had taught him that the real condition was frequently very different from the apparent.) But in this case all was well. He could not remember when he had entered it up, but there it was—"Bletcheley, quite sound." He replaced the little book, and, picking up the speaking tube, told Benjamin to bring the man up.

A few moments later there entered a man who, to the expert eye of Mr Mordon, was a typical gentleman's gentleman. The newcomer paused at seeing the somewhat alarming-looking grille, but Benjamin having closed the door, pushed him gently forward into a chair.

Now, Belman,' said Mr Mordon, in his most affable voice, 'That is the name, isn't it?'

That's right, sir,' said the man.

Well, Belman, I gather that you think that the contents of this envelope addressed to Lord Bletcheley may interest me.'

"You can bet your sweet life they will," answered Belman, with a coarse laugh.

"You are Lord Bletcheley's valet?'

Was. Got the sack without notice this morning. Me, that's been with him five years. For doing a thing, too, that half the valets in London do.'

'What was that?'

Mr Mordon always believed in adding to his store of knowledge.

Wearing his evening clothes to go to a dance. Thought he was stayed put for the night, and walked straight into him as I came in."

And he gave you the sack?

Without notice, and with a character that would keep me out of a Salvation Army band. But he didn't know what I'd found in the dress clothes.'

He gave a cunning leer, and pointed at the envelope.

"Was it in the pocket?'

"No, sir. It was not. It was an old suit of his—one he hadn't worn for some time, and it had a hole in the inside breast pocket. I found that out as soon as I put my cigarette case in, because it fell straight through into the bottom of the coat. And when I started to push it up again, I realized that something else had fallen through before. So I got that out too. It was that letter."

I see," said Mr Mordon. May I look at it?"

But now Belman began to get a little restive.

Look here, sir,' he said. "Fair's fair. You're sitting behind a great iron fence. How do I know if I pass this letter through to you that you won't keep it and tell me to go to blazes?'

Because, my man, I don't do business that way. I gather it was from Sir Archibald Maitland's valet that you heard about me?'

That's right.'

And didn't he tell you I treated him fairly?"

'Yes,' said Belman, reluctantly. 'He did.

"Then why should I do otherwise with you? This guide is merely a measure of precaution for such occasions when I have other types of client to interview. However if you prefer it I will come to you."

He rose and came through into the room.

'That's all right, sir,' said Belman, sheepishly. 'No offence meant. Here's the letter.'

14, *Dorchester Square,*
*Tuesday.* W.1

*Bimbo my pet,—John has got to go to Berlin for three nights. From what Jane told me she's going to stop with the male parent. What about it? The Five Feathers again. Not a chance of meeting anyone there.*
TALIE.

Mr Mordon studied it in silence for a while, then he glanced at Belman.

"Bimbo, I presume, refers to the Earl of Bletchelev?"

'That's right, sir. That's his nickname amongst all his friends. Jane is, of course, her ladyship—his wife."

"And who is the writer of this? Who lives at 14 Delchester Square?"

The faintly contemptuous expression which gentlemen's gentlemen assume when dealing with lesser breeds without the law showed for a moment on Belman's face. 'What social ignorance!

'14, Delchester Square," he said, "is the London residence of his Grace the Duke of Chutington. He is the John referred to."

"And who is Talie?"

Belman permitted himself a smile of triumph.

"The Duchess. Her real name is Natalie, but her friends call her Talie."

'Then this letter,' Mr Mordon's voice was shaking with excitement, 'this letter is a suggestion for a clandestine love affair?"

Belman stared at him.

'What else could it be? An invitation to go bird's nesting?'

BUT Mr Mordon ignored the impertinence. The stupendous nature of his haul had almost stunned him. A Duchess and an Earl! It was incredible. Sir Archibald's mere Baron seemed very small beer. A Duchess and an Earl! What a day. What an amazing day.

'Where is the Five Feathers?' he asked.

Belman took a packet of cigarettes from his pocket and lit one.

'Somewhere in the Malvern district,' he answered. "Look here, Mr Mordon, it's like this. I can put two and two together as well as anybody. If you look at the envelope you'll see that half the stamp and the postmark are missing. But it doesn't require that to date the letter. I know when her ladyship went to stop with her father, and the Duke went to Berlin. It was the middle of July last. And it was then that the Earl went away for two nights without me. Now I'd had my suspicions for some time—you see that word 'again' in the letter—"

"What had caused your suspicions?" asked Mr Mordon.

Belman smiled—a faintly contemptuous smile.

'You may take it from me, Mr Mordon, that there's precious little goes on amongst that lot that we don't know. And though I had no proof like that letter, I'd been wondering for quite a while. So when we were staying down in Sussex for Goodwood I put a few questions to the Duchess's maid and found that her Grace had been away at the same time, by herself. She'd been staying with a friend near Malvern.'

"How did the maid know that?"

'The Duchess told her so. And there was a Malvern label on her trunk."

Mr Mordon rubbed his hands together. Better and better. This man Belman was one after his own heart.

'So there won't be much difficulty in locating the inn,' continued Belman. 'And there you've got your case complete. Now then, sir, how much?'

Mr Mordon hesitated.

Even with this crowning gem added to his collection he ran true to type.

"How much do you want?"

'A hundred pounds,' said Belman, promptly. 'Not a penny less. And it's worth ten times that to you.'

Which was certainly true, though it was five minutes before Mr Mordon finally agreed to the figure.

'You needn't bother to count them,' he said, handing over a wad of notes. 'They're new, as you can see. All that you've got to do is to look at the first and last numbers.'

But Belman was leaving nothing to chance. Slowly and laboriously he turned them over while Mr Mordon watched him with growing irritation. He was in a fever of impatience to gloat in secret over his latest purchase.

At last Belman was satisfied, and pocketing the notes he rose to go.

'Good evening, Mr Mordon," he said. 'And I don't know which of us is the bigger scoundrel!'

The door closed behind him, leaving the owner of the house frowning at such a piece of monstrous insolence. But the frown soon disappeared as he once again read the letter in his hand. A Duchess and an Earl!

*"What on earth is the meaning of this?" spluttered Mordon.*
*"Caught him on your very doorstep, sir," said the sergeant, cheerfully*

It staggered him. Properly handled, this ought to be worth eighty thousand at least—perhaps more. And he was just passing through the door of the grille to go to his safe when the sounds of a commotion below made him pause in surprise and annoyance. A man of orderly habits, he disliked anything in the nature of a scene. Was it Belman making trouble? He thought he recognized his voice. He hastily unlocked the safe and deposited the letter inside.

The noise grew louder. He could hear footsteps on the stairs. And the next moment, to his intense indignation, the door was flung open and a positive army of people poured into the room. There was a police-sergeant and three constables, two of whom were holding Belman by the arms. There was a good-looking young man in plain clothes whose face seemed vaguely familiar to him, whilst in the rear of the cavalcade Benjamin hopped about like an agitated hen.

'What on earth is the meaning of this?" spluttered Mr Mordon.

'Caught him on your very doorstep, sir,' said the sergeant cheerfully.

"Caught who?" said Mr Mordon.

"Belman. His lordship's valet."

He nodded towards the young man in plain clothes, and a peculiar empty feeling began to assail Mr Mordon in the pit of his stomach. It was one thing to deal with Duchesses and Earls on paper: it was

somewhat different to have the actual Earl in question in the room with a posse of police.

'What has he done?' He forced himself to speak casually.

"Stolen a lot of things from his lordship's house," cried the sergeant. "And quite by chance he was seen by his lordship getting into the train at Charing Cross. What's the matter, Smith?"

"Just found these in his pocket, Sergeant," said one of the constables, coming forward with the bundle of notes.

"You precious scoundrel," cried the sergeant. "Something more of yours, my lord."

The young man shook his head.

"Give the devil his due," he said, "for he's not guilty on that score. I don't know where he got 'em from, but they're not mine."

"How did you get these notes, Berman?" asked the sergeant, sternly. "Come on, my lad. It will be better for you in the long run to make a clean breast of it."

And now Mr. Mordon's stomach was positively heaving.

"If you want to know, Sergeant," he said, in a shaking voice, "I gave them to him. I wanted the poor fellow to have a fresh start in life."

He threw an agonized look at Belman. Surely the fool would take his cue. But Belman was staring at his late master, and suddenly, to Mr Mordon's speechless horror, he took a step forward.

Fresh start be blowed,' he said. "I'm sorry, my lord, more sorry than I can say that I've done what I have. But I was fed up with being sacked. I got this hundred pounds for one of your lordship's letters that I've just sold him.'

'You fool,' screamed Mr Mordon. "You blasted fool!'

But no one paid any attention to him.

One of my letters?" said the Earl, in a bewildered voice. What the deuce are you talking about?"

'A letter from the Duchess of Chiltington to you, my lord,' said Belman in a low voice. I found it in the lining of your coat.'

And at last the Earl seemed to understand.

You damned swine,' he roared. You infernal blackguard! By God, I'll murder you for that!'

Hold hard, my lord,' said the sergeant quietly. "This wants looking into." He turned to Mr Mordon. 'Has this man sold you a letter of his lordship's?"

Mr Mordon moistened his dry lips, but seemed unable to speak.

'Come, sir, come,' went on the sergeant sternly. "Yes or no?'

"Yes," muttered the other at length.

And you bought it knowing it to be stolen property?" He motioned to two of the constables. You'll come along to the station if you please, and explain to the inspector. I shall want you as well as Belman.'

But, Sergeant," stammered Mr Mordon, I assure you I can make the matter clear."

Then you can do it to the inspector," said the sergeant curtly.

'But I have an important engagement to-night.'

'It must wait. Take him away. I'll be along shortly with Belman. One minute, though. He might destroy the letter on the way. Give it to me. I'll take charge of it."

It's in my safe, Sergeant.

"Then open your safe. Come, sir, or do you wish me to take your keys from you by force?"

Stumbling like an old man, Mr Mordon went to the safe and opened it. His mind was seething chaos. Stolen property. Police-stations! And what was the sergeant saying now? Leave it open. Preposterous! Impossible.

"I will be responsible for all the contents.

The man's odious voice seemed to come from a great distance. Was it all some hideous nightmare? He, Richard Mordon, taken to the police-station. And, most dreadful thought of all, he *could not explain*. There was no explanation. It was stolen property.

The sergeant watched him as he left the room pinioned between the two constables. Then he turned to Benjamin.

"Clear out," he snapped. 'If I want you, I'll send for you.

The door closed. Mr Benjamin's footsteps died away. And as silence fell on the house a strange scene was enacted in Mr Mordon's private study—a performance which would have caused that gentleman, had he seen it, such a rush of blood to the head that death would have been instantaneous. For a well-known member of the peerage, a sergeant, a constable, and a recently sacked valet were sobbing gently with laughter on one another's arms.

"Bob,' said the Duke of Chiltington, removing his constable's helmet, 'you were magnificent.'

Nothing. I remarked, with pride, to what I was during the private interview."

"Well, chaps, we must get on with it," said Ronald, unbuttoning his sergeant's tunic, and removing a false moustache.

'What is the first of the doings?" asked the Earl of Bletchesey.

Find Archie's letter. And then burn every other damned blackmailing document in that safe."

"Give me Tabs's letter to Bimbo," said the Duke, with a grin. I want to have it framed."

AND for those who require the epilogue I cannot do better than to quote verbatim a paragraph from the *Daily Observer*.

### *OUTRAGE ON CITY MAN*
### *WELL-KNOWN FINANCIER TARRED AND FEATHERED*

*A dastardly outrage was perpetrated the night before last on Mr Richard Mordon, the well-known financier. Mr Mordon, who is a much respected citizen of Sevenoaks, was discovered early yesterday morning wandering through some hop fields not far from Tonbridge completely covered from head to foot with tar and feathers. He is still somewhat dazed and incoherent, and from inquiries made at his house it was found that he was far too indisposed to see anyone. It is understood that the difficulty of finding out what happened has been greatly increased by the fact that the miscreants removed his false teeth.*

# THE SEA AGAIN

By

## DENIS MACKAIL

*Illustrated by* FRANK OLDHAM

"WHY am I doing this?" thought Peter Valentine. "What on earth," he was wondering, "can possibly have persuaded me to take part in this preposterous adventure?"

And again he looked out of the railway-carriage window and again he saw the grey clouds scudding past and the trees shivering and bending, and again he heard the wind whistling and the rattle of the rain against the glass. And again he raised his eyes to the rack over his head, and saw the edge of his new suit-case, and the brightly-coloured label dangling from one end of its handle.

"P. Valentine," it said, "Passenger per S.S. *Magnificent*." And there was another label, as he well knew—for though he couldn't see it at the moment, he'd affixed it only last night—which said "Wanted on the Voyage," and bore the number of his single-berth state-room. And the platform at Waterloo had been covered with luggage similarly decorated, and the train was full of characters similarly committed to a week on the wild waves, and perhaps they knew why they had taken this reckless and pointless step. "But I don't," thought Peter. "There's only one possible explanation for it. I must have been mad."

For it wasn't as if any of them were really going anywhere, or as if their ultimate destination weren't merely the port at which they were just about to embark. That's to say that some towns and islands in which he took no interest were certainly included in the itinerary, but the trip had been quite frankly advertised as Seven Days at Sea. And why the blazes anyone should want Seven Days at Sea if they had a home of their own—or if, as in Peter's particular instance, they had only recently moved into a comfortable flat in Hartington House—not only defied all reason, but in his own case, definitely proved that he was as irresponsible as he was insane.

"Ten days ago," he thought, "I'd have laughed at anyone who'd told me I could do a thing like this." But he wasn't laughing now, and, of course, it was easy enough to see how he had fallen into the trap. He had had a cold, and a slight touch of fever. The service-valet had prescribed for him—aspirin with hot whisky and water—and the treatment had been nauseating but, up to a point, effective.

He had stopped coughing and sneezing, and his temperature had gone down again. But a certain languor and lethargy had persisted, and in these circumstances what could be more natural than to take a few days by—but, good Heavens, not on—the sea? Brighton had suggested itself, or possibly Bournemouth, or conceivably Cliftonville. There was a travel-agency among the other shops on the street level of Hartington House, and, again, what could have been more natural than to call in there, discuss hotels and climates, and buy his ticket?

In he had gone, simply and straightforwardly. He had never mentioned ships or voyages; he had merely provided a brief summary of his symptoms and been about to pass on to the other part of his business, when that infernal bald man behind the counter had started his diabolical spell-binding. Had leant right over it with pictures of sun-decks and plans of cabins, had lured him on with tales of salt-breezes and

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revelry had wheedled and bewitched him with all his professional arts, and finally had induced him not only to sign on the dotted line, but even to believe, temporarily, that he was going to have the time of his life.

And that had been nearly a week ago, and as it had turned out he had completely recovered his health—and, but for the threat hanging over him, would have completely recovered his spirits—not more than two days later. Only by this time he had told his friends, and he had made his arrangements at the office, and he had paid his fare and ordered some new clothes and bought that suit-case, and though it had been weak to get let in for it, perhaps it would be weaker still to back out of it. And all the time everyone had kept on saying how, by Jove, they only wished they were going, too.

Liars, thought Peter Valentine, perfidious black-hearted liars. Salt-breezes, he thought, and sneered and shuddered simultaneously as the wind howled in his ears. Revelry, he thought, and glanced once more at the desiccated old gentleman opposite him, and at the hag in the far corner, and at her stout, spectacled companion at the other end of his own seat. And then again he looked out of the window, and was horrified to see the ruffled surface of a wide stretch of water.

Gosh!" he thought. "We're nearly there, and of course, if I had the pluck of a rabbit I'd take the next train back to London." But if he did this, he would be wasting all the money he had sunk, and could he hope to intercept or recover his cabin-trunk? They were moving more slowly now, and tittuping over a number of points in a yard with shipping on both sides.

Whoo!" went the wind again, and then they were sliding into a long, dark shed, and the desiccated old gentleman was buttoning his overcoat, and the two women had risen and were trying to pull their luggage off the racks.

Allow me," said Peter, having already dealt with his new suit-case. But he was of little actual assistance, because the train had stopped now, and a horde of white-jacketed stewards were swarming aboard and displaying the utmost nautical efficiency. His suit-case was reft from him, and rushed towards a sloping canvas tunnel. He was hurrying after it with a crowd of other passengers. He was struggling up an incline. On the point of pitching off the top end, he felt a firm grip on his elbow, and was forced to acknowledge the help of yet another steward.

Thanks," he said, side-stepping swiftly to avoid the onslaught from behind. So this was the *Magnificent*, he was thinking, and he hadn't even seen it yet, owing to the sudden celerity of his embarkation. Well, it seemed larger than he had feared, and the hall in which he was standing—though it undoubtedly had a faint aroma of oil and indiarubber—seemed solid and luxurious enough. Why, there were shops over there, and a bank, and a big staircase with two lifts.

By Jove!" he thought. "It's certainly bigger than most hotels, and it's a good deal cleaner and neater. I think I'll explore a bit." So he left the hall and began climbing the stairs, and as a lot of other passengers had had the same notion, he and they were constantly colliding with each other in the entrances to the various public rooms. For, of course, as soon as they'd glanced at one, they wanted to see another, so that they kept stepping backwards on to each other's feet, and apologizing, and—perhaps owing to the novelty and excitement of it all—laughing good-naturedly as well.

By Jove," thought Peter again. "I'd no idea it was such a size. I wonder what my cabin's like, and where on earth it is." Yet before he could cope with this problem, his suddenly-awakened pride in the *Magnificent* and the whole of our mercantile marine caused him to mount still higher, and presently the stairs stopped, and he stepped carefully over a six-inch sill.

What's the point of that?" he wondered, never having been on the Atlantic in November—and emerged on the boat-deck.

He knew it was the boat-deck, because of the number of boats, but even they, at any rate in Southampton harbour, seemed large enough to still any qualms as to their purpose. "By gosh!" he thought. "It's a fine sight up here." And he leant over the rail, and though the wind still buffeted his face, the wavelets beneath him seemed nothing from this height. Besides, there was a patch of blue sky out at sea—or in the direction which he took to be out at sea—and honestly, with a ship this size, it seemed impossible that he should ever feel any anxiety or discomfort.

AT this moment a blast from a bugle, blown exactly behind him, caused him to start and spin round, with his heart beating violently.

What's the matter?" he gasped. What's up? What's happened?"

Luncheon, sir," said the bugler, and saluted, and strode away to repeat his ear-splitting performance elsewhere.

Oh," said Peter, and began retracing his journey, and found another steward who put him on the right route for his cabin. And here was his luggage, and here was a real bed, and there—as on the plan—was a gleaming and well-fitted bathroom. A little smaller, for a change, than he had expected.

*The young woman laughed as he let go of her; she was unmistakably the pretty girl from the restaurant*

but again nothing could be neater, or cleaner or more comfortable. He washed his hands and set off in search of the dining-room. Joined a stream of puzzled and uncertain tourists smelt food, followed the smell, and was welcomed by a warm smile and a lot of brass buttons on the threshold of an immense restaurant.

Alone, sir? Very good, sir. Number Twenty-seven.

A SMALL table on the edge of a balcony, with further vistas of napery and cutlery below. And a menu—gosh, what a menu! Every dish he had ever heard of, and all included and paid for already. Not bad, you know. Certainly no risk of starvation on the *Magnificent*. In fact, if one weren't jolly careful—— Hullo. What was happening now? What was that sort of rumbling?

Steward.

"Yes, sir?"

What's that noise? Do you hear it?"

Engines, sir. We're just starting."

"Oh," said Peter, but he still felt perfectly well, and as he had just ordered his lunch, he had better eat it. Wonderful organization, though, all those fellows down in the engine-room, and officers—at least he hoped so—up on the bridge, and waiters—no, he must remember to call them stewards—racing about all round him.

By Jove!" he thought. "I'm rather glad I've done this." And he began looking at the other passengers again, and though many of them were undoubtedly middle-aged and mouldy, closer examination certainly revealed a few exceptions. Over there, for instance, at a table on the other side of the balcony, there was a girl lunching with presumably her parents, who was really quite attractive. Young and fresh-looking. A nice smile. A really charming nose. Ah—

But here the girl in question suddenly turned her head towards him, and Peter was fain to appear absorbed in absorbing his food. "Dash!" he thought. "I hope she didn't think I was staring at her!" And then, again. "Dash!" he thought. "I wonder how one gets to know people on this boat. I wonder if one *does* get to know them. I wonder if I didn't make a mistake in coming quite by myself."

This doubt and the sense of loneliness accompanying it became more acute as the afternoon wore on, nor were matters improved by the distinct rolling and pitching which began as the *Magnificent* left the Solent. It wasn't as Peter kept telling himself that he felt exactly ill, and indeed it was remarkable how steady the vessel still seemed in comparison with some of the smaller ships that they occasionally sighted. But the constant creaking, the constant necessity of giving thought to one's equilibrium, and the entire absence of any occupation, all preyed slightly on the solitary passenger's spirits.

He walked a great deal, he sat in various chairs, he listened to the orchestra, he tried to concentrate on an illustrated journal, he got up and walked again. He read printed notices wherever he saw them, he discovered the barber's shop and considered and dismissed the idea of having his hair cut, he eyed the other travelers and they eyed him. But this was all that happened until he decided to have an unnecessary bath so as to lengthen the process of changing for dinner, and the dinner itself, though even more gargantuan than the lunch, somehow failed to rouse his appetite.

It seemed to him now, in fact, that all this luxury merely gilded the unpalatable truth that he was in an hotel and a palpitating hotel at that, from which it was impossible to escape. He saw the pretty girl again, and she was certainly looking no plainer in an evening frock, but how did this benefit him, and what else did it do save accentuate his solitude? Presently she and her parents got up to leave, and he felt lonelier than ever. One of the printed notices had announced dancing in the Imperial Salon at nine o'clock, but he couldn't go there and dance by himself, and it would be idiotic just to sit and look on. He spent the rest of the evening between the library and the smoking-room, alternately looking at his watch and pining for his comfortable flat. At ten o'clock he returned to his cabin, undressed, and retired to bed.

Creak-creak! went the *Magnificent*. Whoosh! went the big seas outside. Yet presently Peter slept, nor did he wake again until his steward called him at half-past eight with a cup of tea and two startlingly irreconcilable pieces of information. They were in the Bay of Biscay, said the steward, and it was a fine day and dead calm. Astonishing, thought Peter, yet distinctly encouraging. He got up, shaved, bathed, dressed, and had a huge breakfast. And there was the pretty girl again—really she was one of the prettiest girls he had ever seen—and the sun came into the restaurant, and his spirits rose, and he could see how already the other passengers were beginning to break the ice and were nodding and smiling at each other, and again perhaps after all he was glad he had come.

Yet nobody nodded or smiled at him, nor did he exactly like to start ice-breaking with anyone else. He began walking again—he must have walked miles past all those rows

of deck-chairs and all those increasingly friendly and affable groups, but still nobody addressed him, and still he didn't quite see how he was to butt in where he hadn't been introduced. He paused, hovered and set off again. The whole scene and the whole atmosphere were simply insisting on social intercourse, but he couldn't achieve it because he was English and self-conscious, because at the moment these qualities were even more powerful than the companionable influence of the sea.

So that one can't say how long he might have chosen to remain an outcast and a pariah if chance hadn't come to his aid. At about a quarter past twelve, when on the point of seeking the smoking-room from sheer dejection and exhaustion, he approached one of the numerous doorways, and a young woman simultaneously shot out of it, and even a self-conscious Briton was bound to try to catch her before she fell.

What's more, Peter Valentine succeeded, and the young woman laughed as he let go of her, and what's still more, she was unmistakably the pretty girl from the restaurant.

'Oh, thank you so much,' she said. 'Those silly little steps,' she said. 'Why do they have them?'

Just what I keep wondering,' said Peter. 'I say, I do hope you're not hurt?'

'Not in the least—thanks to you. I say, you've got a table just opposite ours, haven't you?'

'Yes. You're with your father and mother, aren't you?'

'Yes. You're alone, aren't you?'

"Yes. I say, let me carry that rug, may'n't I?"

'Oh, thanks awfully. I say, don't you love this ship?'

'Rather!' said Peter. 'Though of course, I don't know many people—well, not yet.'

'What a shame!' said the pretty girl. 'I suppose that's why you weren't dancing last night? It was absolutely marvellous.'

'Was it?' said Peter with a swift spasm of jealousy.

'Yes, it was glorious. You certainly mustn't miss it this evening.'

'I won't,' said Peter dashingly and daringly. 'And perhaps—'

'Just a moment,' said the girl. "I must give that rug to mummie. And she bore down on her parents in their deck-chairs, and as Peter was still carrying the rug, he naturally followed her. 'Here you are, darling,' she said, taking it from him, 'and this is Mr.—— Oh, dear, how silly of me. I don't even know your name yet, do I?'

'Valentine,' said Peter, bowing to all concerned.

'How do you do?' said the girl's parents, and as there were labels attached to their chairs, Peter knew as they leant forward that their name was Bolitho.

Miss Bolitho, he thought, and while he was still wondering what else she was called, her father solved the problem by addressing her as Imogen. 'Imogen,' thought Peter. An attractive name. It suits her.

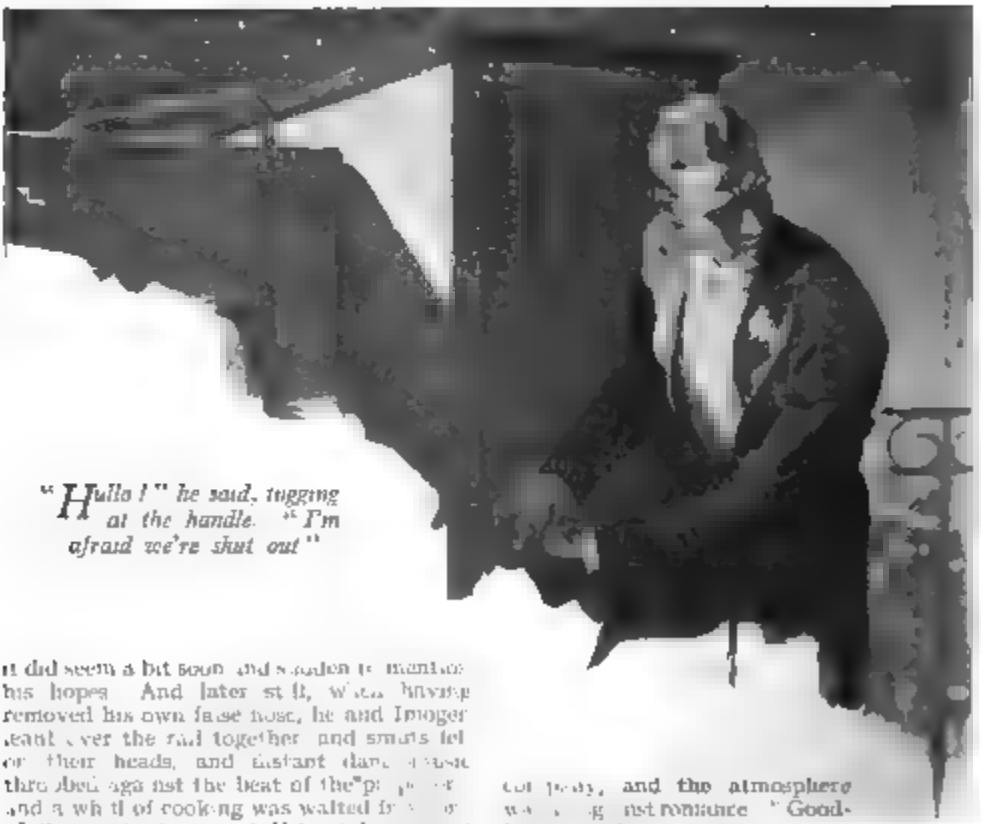
And suddenly he became still more dashing and daring, and asked her if she'd care to walk round with him, and she said she'd love to, and he forgot all about his fatigue, and they went on walking and talking together until the bugle blew again for lunch.

AND if anyone thinks this was rather quick going for a shy Englishman at for a girl of unquestionably gentle upbringing, then let them blame the Bay of Biscay or the *Magnificent*, or the Board of Directors who had discovered that though people no longer wanted to travel on the mail routes, they came crowding on board so as to go nowhere in particular. Blame the sea, in fact, if any blame is required, and its strange effect on our island race. All over the vessel passengers were now opening their hearts to each other and pouring out their souls, and forgetting their stiffness, and laughing and linking arms and generally speaking behaving as they'd never dreamt of behaving on dry land in their lives.

Wonderful, isn't it? And pretty wonderful it seemed to Peter Valentine in the few moments when he had time for thought, that he should have met this girl, and that he should be spending all day with her, and dancing with her at night, and going ashore with her for the further study of her profile instead of looking at whatever sights he was supposed to see.

Nor was this all because her parents seemed to like him quite as much as he liked them, and it was at their suggestion that he left his tiny table and joined them on the other side of the balcony. Never had there been so pleasant and friendly an association, as a background to such a crowded and intoxicating week. Out here on the ocean familiarity flourished. All the Bolithos were now calling the ex-outcast 'Peter,' and Peter no longer hesitated to address one of them as 'Imogen.' He was aware also that he was in love with her, that she certainly wasn't wholly unresponsive, and that her father and mother hadn't asked those flatteringly frank questions about his work and his income for nothing.

Yet even on the last night, when he and Mr. Bolitho were both wearing false noses,



*"Hullo!" he said, tugging at the handle. "I'm afraid we're shut out"*

it did seem a bit soon and sudden to mention his hopes. And later still, when Bolitho removed his own false nose, he and Imogen leant over the rail together and smuts fell on their heads, and distant dance music throbbed against the beat of the propellers and a whiff of cooking was wafted from one of the ventilators, and Ushant bunked at them from what they had both learnt to call the starboard bow, even in these romantic circumstances he hesitated lest too much boldness should lose him everything.

It had been a wonderful time, he said and Imogen said that it had been quite marvellous and glorious. And they must meet again, he said, and Imogen said yes, of course they must. Perhaps, he said, they'd all dine with him one evening, and Imogen said that would be lovely. Yes, they even fixed a date, subject to confirmation by her parents, but that was all they fixed that night, and presently they joined the dancers again, and both looked a little sad and soppy. And then the orchestra played the National Anthem, and they parted. And when Peter woke again the *Magnificent* was steaming up Southampton Water, and at breakfast all the passengers were already looking at each other as though they had emerged from some enchantment, and were a little nervous as to what they might have done during it.

Even the Bolithos seemed a trifle preoccupied with their packing, just as Peter was distracted by the question of tips. Impatience had seized on the whole ship's company, and the atmosphere was against romance. "Good-bye, people were saying everywhere. "Mind you ring me up." But already they scarcely meant it as the old life took hold of them, and their unaccountable friendliness began to fade.

Good-bye, Mrs. Bolitho. Peter was saying. "Good-bye, Mr Bolitho. Good-bye Imogen. Don't forget you're dining on the sixteenth."

And Mr and Mrs. Bolitho thanked him though they were already trying to spot their chauffeur on the quay. And Imogen held his hand—or didn't she?—in a manner which suddenly very nearly made him propose to her there and then. But he didn't, or he hadn't, it seemed, and now he was in the train again, and the whole voyage was rapidly becoming a dream. Except for a face and a voice that still haunted him, that made him groan suddenly, that were so clear in his memory that he knew nothing could ever erase them.

"Imogen," murmured Peter Valentine. Why on earth hadn't he asked her to marry him last night?

So he returned to his flat, and returned to his work, and perhaps she'd only think

didn't appear a mockery as the days dragged slowly by or as he lay awake at night.

Finally he was so terrified lest his invitation had been forgotten that he wrote to Mrs. Bourbon to remind her of it. A telephone message—satisfactory, but scarcely what he had secretly prayed for—arrived to fortify and test his endurance. Only two more days to wait. Now only one more day. Should they dine in the restaurant downstairs and dance afterwards? No. That might be more amusing for his guests, but somehow he required something quieter and more concentrated.

They'd dine in his flat, and the establishment should be called on to do its utmost in the way of food, drink, and flowers. He

it impertinent if he tried to start a correspondence when they were to meet again so comparatively soon. Not that he didn't actually begin several letters before he put them in his waste-paper basket. Not that the phrase "comparatively soon"

summoned the head waiter and made extravagant arrangements. He shifted a lot of the furniture and then shifted it back again. He experimented with the lighting. In a moment of madness he purchased a number of feminine toilet-requisites from the chemist next door to the travel-agency, arranged them on his dressing-table and then was so disgusted by its appearance that he had them all in a cupboard.

Never mind, it was the sixteenth at last. He took a taxi from his office, had a bath, attired himself carefully, set out his cocktail-glasses, upset one of the flower-vases, and rang for a waiter to clear up the mess. Looked at his watch, looked at the clock, looked out of the window. Brushed his hair again. Listened. Waited. Leapt in the air as the bell rang, and rushed to open the door himself.

"Hullo!" he was saying. "Hullo, Mrs. Boltho! Hullo, Mr. Boltho! Hullo, Imogen! How do you do? How are you all? This is splendid! Let me take your coat, sir. And your cloak, Mrs. Boltho. And yours, Imogen. Come along into my sitting-room. This way. Yes, that's it. That's right."

NOTHING, in fact, could conceivably have been warmer than Peter Valentine's welcome, or heartier than the insane laugh which he emitted as his guests filed past him. And yet already he had been conscious of a drop in the temperature and a change in the atmosphere. The Bolthos smiled at him—they could hardly do otherwise when he was guffawing like that—yet their smiles were tinged with an unexpected and decidedly anti-British reserve.

He stopped giggling at once. He saw—of course he quite saw—that the circumstances had distinctly altered since their last meeting. If he hadn't been thinking of Imogen and nothing else, he must have realized it far sooner that they were no longer shipmates but characters meeting for the first time on shore. A sudden stiffness, corresponding to this discovery, swept over him, and he offered Mrs. Boltho a cocktail rather as if he'd just been transformed into an actor playing the part of a butler.

"Oh, thank you," she said. "Thank you, Mr. Valentine." And then Mr. Boltho said, "Thanks, Valentine." And by this time the formality had reached such a pitch that Peter hesitated even to address Imogen by her Christian name. "Cocktail?" he said, approaching her with the tray.

"Oh," she said, "No, thank you—very much. No, not for me."

What? He stared at her, for though Heaven knew that none of them had been topers on the *Magnificent* her one cocktail had been as regular as the orangeade with which she'd always followed it. They'd had jokes about it. Night after night. And now—

The paralyzing thought suddenly struck him that some tale-bearer had been slandering him behind his back. He glanced at her again, with more bewilderment than reproach, and the look which she shot at him seemed both guarded, he thought, and uneasy. What on earth did it all mean?

Nothing, of course, except that this was a flat and not a boat, and that our island race may resolve some of its frigidity when it gets on the briny, but naturally resumes its normal habits on shore. Mr. and Mrs. Boltho were far from resenting Peter's hospitality and were being quite as genial as was in accordance with their ordinary code, but they'd only known him a week and they were English, and Hartington House was neither rolling nor creaking.

"Quite," said Mr. Boltho, when Peter had muttered something about their possibly preferring his dining-room to the restaurant. "Yes, yes. Much pleasanter, I'm sure."

He even rubbed his hands together, but his expression remained as phlegmatic as ever, and it was quite obvious that he was only being polite. The same social circumspection was apparent in Mrs. Boltho's civil comments on the candlesticks on the dinner-table, and of course Peter didn't want either of them to think that he was presuming on their maritime intimacy—this were what they feared, so that every moment he became more courteous and cautious.

And Imogen? Prettier than ever. Quite lovely, in fact, in the candlelight, so that the host's heart beat whenever he looked at her and he could have groaned again at her cool inaccessibility. Yet why should she encourage him when he had become as distant as she was? How could she possibly tell him how wretched and miserable she felt at the change that had come over him? Was it imaginable that she should offer him anything which he so clearly didn't want?

She bit her lip and controlled herself, and the conversation flickered and burned, and was stirred every time with greater and more transparent effort. For some reason, also, having avoided the subject of their sea-trip at the beginning, they appeared to find it unmentionable when it might have given them something to talk about. The silences became longer and more frequent. The exquisite dinner did nothing to melt the ice-pack in which they were hard and fast.

"Perhaps," said Peter, who was now

terrified of being left alone with anybody, "we'd better have coffee and so forth all together. Eh, Mrs. Boltho?"

Delightful," said Mrs. Boltho, without a trace of enthusiasm. And back they all went into the other room, where Mr. Boltho refused to sit down, but began pacing about like a caged and fidgety lion. Peter had to chase after him with the cigar-box, and when he caught him finally and turned round, there was Mrs. Boltho out of the sofa where he had put her, and apparently trying to open one of the windows.

"A bit stuffy in here," he suggested. "Allow me."

"Don't trouble," said Mrs. Boltho, who'd actually been trying to see if her car had come back yet. "A delightful view you have here," she said.

"Yes," said Peter. And with another terrific effort he added, "I believe it's better still higher up."

"Is there a roof-garden?" asked Imogen ingeniously.

"Well, no," said Peter. "But there's a roof, I believe. Would you care to see it?"

It seemed established in the absence of any alternative or opposition that they were now all to go up on the roof. Why? Never mind that. Perhaps it would give them something to talk about. Peter led the way, and after some fumbling found a door at the top of the stairs which he succeeded in opening. They all stepped over a six-inch sill into a mysterious region of big chimney-stacks and iron railings, and as Peter himself came last, the door slipped from his fingers and closed with a thud—and, worse still, with a click.

"Hullo!" he said, tugging at the handle. "I say," he added, "I'm afraid we're shut out."

"Eh?" said Mr. Boltho. "What's that? Can't you open it?"

"No," said Peter. And he began thumping on it, and shouting, but of course nobody heard him. "I'm awfully sorry," he said. "I don't quite know what I'd better do. I mean, I believe there's a fireman who might come round presently, but—"

His voice died away. None of the Bolthos said anything. But far, far away there was a faint sound of dance music, and a steady throbbing from the shaft of the heating apparatus in the basement.

"Why," said Imogen, suddenly, "I know what this reminds me of."

"I've got it," cried her mother. "This smell of oil! And of cooking, too."

"Plenty of smuts, anyhow," said Mr. Boltho. "By Jove, you know, it is like the dear old *Magnificent*. Quite a breeze up here, what's more. Look here, my dear, I think we'd better get in the lee of this cistern or whatever it is. By George!" added his voice from round the corner. "There's a ledge here we can sit on. Come along, Mary!"

And Mrs. Boltho vanished in the obscurity, and Peter said, "Imogen—I say—Imogen—"

"Yes, Peter?"

"Do you hear the music?"

"Yes, Peter."

"Shall we—shall we go and lean over that rail, and listen to it?"

Well, of course it was still steadier than the dear old *Magnificent*, it was also dirtier—though the dear old *Magnificent's* boat-deck can be dirty enough when they open the dampers of those oil-burning furnaces. But there was the music, there was the rhythmic pulsation, there was the wind, there were the smells, above all there was the rail.

For if you've travelled at all, you know the magic of those rails, the extraordinary, though admittedly often dangerous, feeling of sympathy and propinquity which you get by turning your back on everything else, while your elbow slips along the top until it just touches another elbow, and then——

And then you remove it for a moment, and your arm and the other arm are linked.

FIVE minutes later—

"Oh, Peter! Oh, Peter darling! Oh, I'm so happy!"

Ten minutes later—

"Eh? What? Not really? Mary, do you hear that? By Jove, I'm delighted! Couldn't be more pleased about anything. You mustn't think me sentimental, my boy, but I was just saying to my wife—— Hullo! Who's that? Hi! Steward! I mean, fireman! Don't shut that door again—we're just coming."

But of course, if all these big new buildings get on to it, we're afraid the shipping business will be back in a worse state than ever.

# MY BEST NATURE PHOTOGRAPH

*Famous Experts, including*

*Mr. and Mrs. Seton Gordon, Neville Kingston, Stanley Crook, Niall Rankin, F. B. Kirkman, and Frances Pitt,*

*tell how their most interesting Camera-Pictures were obtained.*

HOW is it done? That is the question which is inevitably asked when one sees the magnificent photographs of some of Britain's shyest birds, many of them obviously taken without the "satter" being in the least aware that a human being was anywhere in the near neighbourhood. Photographic skill of a very high degree, an infinite knowledge of the haunts and habits of wild birds, and endless patience, are qualities with which the successful naturalist with a camera must be endowed. And perhaps the following descriptions of how their best photograph was obtained, contributed by some of the most notable experts, will show that of these qualities the greatest of all is patience.

## MR. AND MRS. SETON GORDON.

THE most wonderful thing I have seen in the bird world was the mother golden eagle sheltering her eaglet from the direct rays of the summer sun shown in the photograph on page 515. It came about in this way. I was in my hiding post far up a rock and the hide was no more than four yards from the eyrie. On this particular morning the sun was hot and was shining directly into the eyrie. Strong summer sunlight is fatal to young birds. I have known a young gannet (and gannets are most hardy birds) killed by direct exposure to the sun, and a nestful of young larks suffer a like fate. The mother eagle was well aware of this danger, and as the sun increased in power walked across so that she stood between the eaglet and the sun, and in three distinct motions spread out her magnificent wings until they were outstretched to their full extent. There she stood, and I was so lost in admiration at the superb picture she made that I scarcely dared to photograph her, and change my plate lest she should be alarmed by the slight noise. Fortunately all went well, and after standing for some time motionless the eagle folded her wings (the sun by this time had left the eyrie), walked in a slow and stately manner to the edge of the nest, and then sailed away from my sight on the arms of the bil wind.

The photograph by my wife, on the opposite page showing the father eagle holding out a very tiny piece of grouse to one of his eaglets, was taken under very different conditions. Here the eyrie was built on the crown of an old fir tree. The hillside on which the tree was growing was so steep that it was possible to build a hiding post almost on a level with the eyrie, by going about twenty yards up the hill. In this hide either my wife or I spent the best part of thirty-one days, photographing and observing the home life of the eagles. Sometimes at the close of a lonely vigil the observer was so stiff and cramped that it was with difficulty that he (or she) could crawl from the hide. We watched through

hailstorms, thunderstorms, fierce squalls of driven rain, and days of tropical heat and all the time the eagles went about their family affairs, all unaware that human observers were concealed near

*A month of patient watching in a hide on a level with the tree-tops was necessary before Mrs. Seton Gordon obtained this remarkable photograph of the father eagle in the act of feeding an eaglet.*

*An amazing under-water photograph by Neville Kingston of a cormorant diving for a fish, which it has caught in its bill*

*The mother eagle spre[ads] wings to shelter her eag[le] the direct rays of the sun. A unique study by Seton G[ordon]*

## MR. NEVILLE KINGSTON.

TO obtain successful photographs of diving birds such as the penguin and cormorant when they are seeking food under water, like the one reproduced in this article, not only requires abnormal patience and an iron control over one's language, but it also takes years off one's life.

Owing to the fact that it is, of course impossible to photograph these birds in their natural element, recourse has to be made to a large glass-sided tank big enough to enable the performers to swim and dive in all directions. The large size of the tank, however nice it may be for the birds is the reverse for the photographer, for there is plenty of room for the swimmers to turn their backs towards the lens at the moment of exposure, and for this reason, and other causes due to the insufficient light, nearly a hundred plates were exposed before one proper result was obtained.

Unlike the penguin, which progresses under the surface by means of its flippers or modified wings, the cormorant swims with its feet, the wings being held against the body, and thus it kicks its way under the water like some huge, synthetic frog, its head and neck shooting backwards and forwards in its search for fish on the bottom.

The speed of the cormorant beneath the surface is greater than one would imagine and the image of the bird often moves right across the photographic plate during the very short time that it requires to release the camera shutter and many times leaves only a picture of its tail as a souvenir.

Add to these trials the fact that diving birds rarely swim after their finny food in the same direction on two successive journeys, and that they move too rapidly for any focusing to be attempted, the securing of any distinct picture at all is rather amazing, and I prefer to put it down to pure luck, rather than take any dishonest personal credit for the result.

*The beautiful wings are the dominant feature of this fine photograph of a common tern alighting at the nest, by Stanley Crook.*

*The extraordinary action of a gannet, snapped at the moment before alighting, is clearly shown in this arresting picture by Niall Rankin.*

*A lovely study of the snowy egret, by D. Seth-Smith, which strikingly depicts the snow-white purity of the bird's plumage.*

*The poetry of motion is wonderfully exemplified in this photograph by A. W. Kerr of a seagull taking food whilst on the wing.*

## MR. STANLEY CROOK.

A FINE day in June tempted me to pack up my camera and accessories, including a rather primitive hiding tent, and to set off for a large stretch of sand dunes near Southport, where I knew a colony of terns were nesting

Having arrived at my destination, I began to search around for a nest which, while fairly pictorially situated, would give me a chance to obtain a series of flight photographs. Finally I selected a nest which was made on a small ridge of sand with a bank of dwarf willow as a background

It is rather hard work tramping over the sand with a half-plate camera, eighteen half-plates, etc., and I was glad to unload my pack, and fix up my "hide," composed of four stout sticks and some casement-cloth Erecting and focusing my camera on the eggs in the nest, I settled down to await results. When I had arrived among the nesting terns, the whole colony within the vicinity had risen in the air, and were accompanied by a number of redshank, black-headed gulls, and lapwing, but by the time I had fastened myself in the hide the majority of the birds had returned to their nests and only two or three pairs of terns were hovering round and the almost deafening cries had subsided

I noted through my observation holes that "my" tern was sweeping round the hide, and gradually drawing nearer to the nest

*Their first meal! This wonderful photograph of a pair of bullfinches is considered by Miss Frances Pitt to be her best. The male bird is feeding the chicks, while the female bird looks on.*

*The ruffling of the feathers is the common of anger in birds, and the nesting g seen below is shown to be distinctly ann at being photographed by F. B. Kirkma*

At last she alighted about twenty yards away walked a few yards then rose into the air and alighted at the side of the nest but the point of view was not a good one, so I kept perfectly quiet and allowed her to settle on the nest for a short spell, then clapped my hands. She left the nest and I fired my shot, and the resulting negative showed her well up in the air with wings fully extended. She was back at the nest within five minutes and I secured the photograph reproduced here

### MR. NIALL RANKIN.

THE photography of birds in flight is one of the most thrilling branches of Natural History work, but at the same time one of the most difficult and, as I know from bitter experience, one of the most tantalising. A large and fairly accessible sea-bird colony where one can get right on to the ledges amongst the nests, is the most ideal spot for this occupation. Here a real enthusiast can sit by the hour (partially hidden, if possible, by rocks) and watch bird after bird dash past on its way to or from the cliff. As he gazes at them he thanks to himself how superbly close they are and how simple it would be to get good pictures of them, but a few attempts show him that the matter is not quite so simple. I have spent many happy hours in such places, but the number of *really* first class photographs that I have succeeded in getting is terribly small and I shudder to think of the scores of plates I have exposed.

The accompanying photograph was taken on the Bass Rock, one of the greatest of the gannet colonies in the British Isles. I wished to obtain a picture of a bird actually alighting at its nest, and after descending about eighty feet down the cliff with the aid of a rope, I selected a nest with a fairly young bird in it. The parent would be less likely to leave a small bird for any length of time. I was faced with the usual problem of focus, but this time I solved it by getting the lighthouse-keeper who was assisting me to hold the points of the tripod in the air at the spot where I *thought* the bird would come down. This, of course, was mere supposition. Having focused on these I set my shutter at one-thousandth of a second, my stop at F 6.3, and waited for the bird's return. The result you see here.

### MISS FRANCES PITT.

ALTHOUGH I have taken many thousands of wild-life photographs, none has pleased me so much as the one of a pair of bullfinches at their nest here reproduced, and I always regard it as my best. The nest was in a young spruce in a fir plantation. I had had a hiding tent up for some days and the birds were thoroughly used to it so that I was able to watch their comings and goings and the details of their behaviour at close quarters. They were a delightful couple and fascinating to watch. She a grey Quakerish person and he so gay with his salmon-pink front. He had been feeding her with regurgitated food from his crop during the days of incubation, but there came a morning when tiny chicks emerged from the delicate blue eggs. The cock duly arrived at the nest with his throat swollen with food. His mate rose from her babies as if to let him see them, but opened her beak to be fed. He stared at the family, quite ignoring the expectant hen, and then very gently and carefully gave his offspring their first meal. The discomfited expression of the female bullfinch even now is fresh in my memory.

### MR. F. B. KIRKMAN.

THE picture of the angry gannet was taken on the Bass Rock. The difficulties experienced in taking it were mainly concerned with the choice of the right moment and adequate lighting. The subject of the photograph gave little difficulty. It was obviously not a shy sitter. It had, indeed, no intention of quitting its nest and as shown threatening to snap at anyone coming within reach. The threat was not one to be ignored, for the gannet's beak is strong and is provided with a hook. One of the lighthouse-keepers of the Bass, who happened to climb down the cliff too close to one of these birds, had a furrow of blood cut across his forehead with that same hook.

If a gannet persists in barring the way to the ledges beyond the usual method of dislodging it is to keep tapping it on the head with one's cap. I remember that many years ago a keeper tried this form of persuasion with the official cap. Just as the bird took flight, its hook got entangled in the gold braid, it flew off with the cap and finally let it drop into the sea, much to the disgust of the keeper.

There are two things worth noting about the gannet in the picture. The first is the ruffling of the feathers, the common sign of anger in birds. The sign of fear is compression of the feathers. The second is the foot seen rising off the egg. The gannet is one of the very few large species that has no brooding spot, a name given to the bare patch of skin in the feathers of the breast into which the eggs are fitted, and from which they get warmth and moisture. For the brooding spot the gannet substitutes its webbed feet, both of which are placed upon its one egg.

# INCORRIGIBLE CORINNE

## By ROLAND PERTWEE

THE fact that the absence of anything approaching a serious thought in Corinne's head added to, rather than diminished, the delight that I and other members of my sex had for her company must reflect nothing but contempt upon the requirements of the average male.

It is doubtful whether Corinne's head accommodated a thought of any kind other than a general desire to please. And since it is obviously impossible for a number of males to be pleased by one girl simultaneously, she never got her wish and was always in disgrace.

It would be unfair to say that she was entirely to blame. Nature had been over lavish in her gifts to Corinne.

Had she been endowed with wisdom as well as loveliness she would have set a seal upon her treasures, but that, alas, was not her practice. Corinne was born with generosity for her guiding star. Her smile was anybody's for the asking, nor could she refuse that moist geranium mouth of hers that was at once a provocation and a reward.

During her infancy boys fought for her, and in later years the havoc she wrought was inestimable.

What was practically our first meeting shed little credit upon either of us.

Corinne had run away from home because her parents refused to countenance her engagement to a young man with a hobby for taking motor-bicycles to pieces and putting them together all wrong. The young man's mother thought him a mechanical genius, a view that the rest of the world in general and Corinne's parents in particular refused to share.

So Corinne ran away, and by accident I happened to know where she had run. And because Corinne's parents could not bear to be without her, they reluctantly consented to the marriage and late one night I called for Corinne at her lodging in East Fifty-Fifth Street, New York. I told her that all was well, and I put her into a taxi to bring her home. But as she was crying somewhat I directed the driver to take us for a turn round Central Park.

Although Corinne was not an American born, she had lived in New York long

*ILLUSTRATED BY J. MORTON SALE*

Copyright, 1933, by Roland Pertwee.

*She was thoughtfully spinning a small felt hat on the forefinger of her right hand. As I approached she turned, and her forehead went into a frown.*

enough to behave as other young women behave when they are driven by other young men round Central Park. Suggestion plays an active part in our lives, and I am sure that neither of us wilfully intended to behave in a lover-like fashion. The night and the route were responsible. Only the coward feeds upon regret, and if any defence of my share in that night's work is called for I can only say that the young man who mutilated motor-cycles was no friend of mine. Later and with reason, he assured me that friendship between us was out of the question.

I am uncertain how many times we drove round the Park, since in affairs of the heart time and distance lose their accustomed measurements. It may have been the constant revolutions which induced a certain giddiness of conduct at which older persons might have shaken their heads. But we were young and happy and cannot be blamed for postponing the painful duty of informing Corinne's young man that the gate awaited him.

Since her tender nature rebelled against inflicting sorrow upon anyone, Corinne went straight to bed and left me to handle the situation. We parted at the foot of the fire stairs, and my last view of her that night was of a pair of satin slippers vanishing like birds through an open window sixteen storeys above.

I ascended in the lift.

BUT for the young man's mother the affair might have passed off without incident. Corinne's parents were delighted, and disposed to regard me as the saviour of the situation, but the young man's mother took a different view. Until then I had committed the error of regarding myself as possessing a nature at once complex and hard to define. The young man's mother finally dispelled any such illusion. Her summing-up of my character, appearance, and conduct was one of the most masterly feats of abusive oratory I have ever heard. What was left of me, after she had done, didn't seem as if it could be worth anybody's while. Corinne's father, whose earlier days in Yorkshire had brought him in contact with the rougher edges of life, managed to extract a certain amount of pleasure out of the harangue, but her mother, a gently-nurtured lady who sought for sermons in stones and good in everything, was deeply offended.

Some of the abuses levelled at me no doubt lingered in her memory after the storm had passed, for when to fulfil the destiny of the evening I made an honourable proposal for the hand of Corinne, the reception of my words was far from flattering. She told me that although grateful for the aid I had rendered in dissolving the partnership between her daughter and the motor maniac she did not feel that it qualified me for such an enduring reward.

In vain I pleaded that I was a steady young man, well-off, and of tolerable breeding.

"And is it nothing," I wound up, "that I love Corinne?"

It was at that stage of the argument that her father butted in.

"I have yet to meet the fool who doesn't," said he.

At the time I thought the remark singularly callous, but on reflection I was disposed to sympathize with him. Mr. Milner was not romantically inclined, and it must have tried his Yorkshire patience to have to listen to protestations of devotion for Corinne from the endless stream of her admirers.

"When I meet the chap who has the sense to put up a solid reason for marrying my girl," he pursued relentlessly, "maybe I'll listen to him without feeling that I want either to take him by the scruff of the neck and kick him downstairs or go into some quiet place and be sick."

I inquired what solid reasons he would be prepared to regard favourably.

His reply —

"The same ones that persuaded Mrs. Milner and myself to hitch up."

I detected upon Mrs. Milner's face a silencing frown, and, feeling that I owed her something, I begged him to be more specific.

"I married Mrs. Milner because she seemed a plain sensible woman likely to keep my house in a practical and proper manner."

"And her reasons for marrying you?" I ventured.

"Security," he replied, thus revealing the pith and core of her character.

It is strange how certain natures defy their foundations and confound their architects. In the making of Corinne heredity had played a negligible part. The cardinal virtues of her parents had passed over her head without leaving a single grey hair or tracing upon her face one firm line.

I cannot say that the months that followed, during which Corinne and myself, so to speak, accompanied one another, were truly happy. For that I was much to blame. A base suspicion lest she should accept the escort of other young men equally familiar with the romantic inducements of the Park kept me in a constant sweat of apprehension.

It is humiliating to confess it, but I could not trust her generosity to keep itself within bounds. As a result there were endless scenes in which I took the active and

Corinne the passive part I scattered cigarette-ash all over the room, poured bottles of perfume out of the window and smashed quite good vases containing roses sent to Corinne by unauthorized givers

EVERY day for a month I bade her farewell for the last time and returned at the same hour the following evening to say that I meant it and that I wouldn't marry her for anything in the world.

I should have known from the first that Corinne was incapable of constancy and undeserving of the devotion I lavished upon her. Why I stuck by her as long as I did is an unsolved mystery. It is possible, of course, that in my search for a mate I was more actively concerned with ravishing exterior charms than with an inner perfection, and there is no doubt that I was stupendously in love with her. When the gentler emotions of love dominated my indignation at her conduct her adorable face looked afterwards as if it had been sandpapered. Even when temper was at its height and I was bidding her farewell for ever I would sometimes swoop down upon her and bury her head against the wall in the frenzy of my embraces.

It is not every man who goes to such lengths in breaking with his sweetheart and the strain began to tell upon me. Mine is not a nature which flies to extremes. For the sake of my health I avoided Corinne though I must confess the self-denial was extremely irksome. It was only by accident that I heard her father had carried her off on a trip to England. I can't say that I didn't miss her, but I made a resolution never to see her again and swore to keep the oath.

It was nearly a year before she returned and, like a weak-minded fool, I couldn't resist meeting the boat. Even as she came down the gangway of the *Berengaria* I knew that something was wrong.

Sometimes I ask myself whether any bitterness can compete with that which a man feels when he beholds in the lovely and rather foolish face of his adored the dawning symptoms of intellectual birth. It is a tragedy to which most of us are subject. More often than not it is marriage that drives away from innocent eyes and moist, tender mouths that sweet stillness which is a lover's greatest delight.

My glance had not yet rested upon Corinne before I was aware that she had left behind in the British Isles that glorious inconsequence and light-headedness I had so dearly prized and so bitterly resented. The change was so complete that a casual observer might have mistaken her for a sober and intelligent member of society. To say that I was aghast fails to do my emotions justice.

As she passed the barrier she shed upon me a flickering smile. I am no difficulty in classifying it as the tolerant smile of a sweet-natured woman than which there is no more exasperating facial contortion in all the world.

Seizing her wrist I drew her towards me and hissed desperately:

"Corinne, you little never-mind, what have you been up to?"

Her hand made a vain struggle for release but realizing it was captive, slipped down into mine with a warm pressure that revived the ghost of the older and kinder days.

"Don't ask Bengy," she pleaded, "for I can never tell anyone. Be at the Algonquin at three and I'll try and slip down for a minute or so."

By that I knew that her confidence was to be mine and that her embraces belonged to another.

Was I to be blamed for putting on a suit that, customarily, I reserved for funerals? To my dismay Corinne was first to reach the tryst. This being the only occasion on which she had failed to keep me waiting, my spirits fell to a new low level.

She was sitting on a chair of sealing-wax red, thoughtfully spinning a small felt hat on the forefinger of her right hand. Her exquisite mouth was pursed into a pout at once reflective and resentful. She resembled a martyr waiting for the faggots. As I approached she turned and her forehead went into a frown.

'Bengy, the mourning. You've lost someone?'

'You, Corinne.'

But you tried for months to lose me, before I sailed?

"I know," I answered, and looked her in the face. 'And I was right," I added, firmly.

"Yes, perhaps you were. But after all you *are* the one person I can trust."

Having regard to the evening we had spent in the taxi I asked if there was any need to add insult to injury. She did not reply to that. So I told her I was going, but her eyes wouldn't let me. They held me like a snake's.

'Bengy," she said, 'I've done it."

"Done what?

"You'll never tell? Word of honour?"

Get on with it."

And then her story. I will not attempt to reproduce her own words, for Corinne had little gift for narrative. So far as I could gather the boy dwelt in the purlieus of Leeds

*Before I had time to make my presence known, he bore her hand to his mouth and kissed it with ardour*

She had met him among the ruins of Kirkstall Abbey He had a threepenny guide book in his hand and wore no hat His hair at by the afternoon was a sort of pear colour Apparently he used his fingers to comb it with He was not a bit like any other man He was very serious and sweet His occupation was poultry farming and his hobbies antiquarianism and conjuring He was "wonderful about Roman Legions" His last summer holidays had been spent walking from Richborough along Watling Street "as far as it went"

Corinne didn't really know why she had married him (it was at that stage I was glad I had bethought myself to bring a flask), but she believed it was because he said he had always been looking for a girl with similar tastes to his own

May I be forgiven if I pause here to investigate a problem that has puzzled many? How is it that a woman, any woman, can convince a man, any man, that her interests and his own are identical? I do not believe the deception is deliberate It does not matter what a man's hobbies or specialized interests may be, the woman he takes for partner assumes a parallel, if not superior knowledge of the subjects with a rapidity that must discount any merit they might be presumed to possess. The problem is not of great importance save in so far as it sheds a fresh light upon the intellectual defencelessness of the male

There is little doubt in my mind but that the hapless youth was beguiled It cannot have been by what Corinne said, for her ignorance on the subject of the Roman Conquest was unequalled He must have been fooled by the sheer brilliance of her silences. I knew that she was not above such a practice. I myself before I learnt to know her better, had been guilty of the folly of playing to her the musical score of an operette which I had composed Subsequently when I heard her humming a popular air to herself not only out of tune,

but with a preponderance of wrong notes enlightenment came.

And had not one of the most eminent surgeons assured me that she possessed a remarkable knowledge of muscular anatomy and nerve tissues?

With such conquests to her credit, the seduction of the young man from the purlieus of Leeds must have been easy stuff. But why light upon him? To what end or purpose? That was the question wrung from my heart.

And, of course, she didn't know.

I proposed an easier one. How had she fixed it up with her parents?

Her eyes opened so wide that I feared they would fall upon her cheeks.

Her parents didn't know either. Good heavens! if dad ever found out it would be terrible. The whole thing was the most fearful secret.

"But damn it, didn't the honeymoon give you away?"

"Bengy, what are you talking about? There wasn't one. We were just married

at eight o'clock in the morning and—and that was all."

"All?" I repeated.

Absolutely all. I was having breakfast with dad before nine."

I snorted. I don't defend myself. I snorted.

"A lot you must care for that young man."

"I feel a tremendous responsibility towards him."

And yet you walked out on him at the wedding."

Corinne nodded.

"And how," said she. "Oh, Bengy, it was terrible. That very breakfast dad said we were leaving for Liverpool, right away."

And did you?

What else could I do? Of course, I rang up Cyril and told him to be good and patient and work hard and make a fortune and all would be well."

'And ever since,' said I with a touch of bitterness, "the hens have been laying golden eggs.'

'Oh, please,' said she. "At least I thought you would be helpful."

In what way 'helpful'?"

But she would not answer that. With superb self-control I demanded the fellow's name.

"Knots. Cyril Knots."

He'll have plenty of opportunity to do so," said I.

And at that Corinne began to laugh.

There was something about Corinne's laughter that was to me irresistible. It was lucky that we had not got the place to ourselves.

"I know," she gurgled, "it is a silly, mingy little name, like pins and bits of stick but" and she became serious "it's mine now and I've got to make the best of it."

But I knew that there was no best to be made of it, and I rested my chin on a short fist and muttered grumblingly.

"Oh, Bengy," she pleaded. "Don't look like impatience on a monument frowning at Knots. I didn't want to hurt you. I never want to hurt anybody. But things always turn out like this with me. How'd it be if I ran home and put on a pretty frock and then you took me to some place and we forgot all about everything for just one evening."

But I would have none of it.

'Go home and tell your mother," I said, 'that she certainly made a miserable job of you."

You aren't going to desert me, Bengy?"

Yes, I am. And until such a time as you gather the strength and the courage really to hurt somebody. I never went to—to to put my arms round you and hold you and kiss again."

And she said—

'Of course, from now onwards, Cyril is the only man who will ever mean anything big in my life, but I do think you are the nicest of them all."

But I would have none of it. I cast her from me like an outworn glove.

THERE is a silver lining to many a shroud. From the outset of my career as a writer of song music, critics had been unanimous in accusing my compositions of revealing an irresponsible not to say frivolous, tendency. I quote at random from a New York daily:

"If Benjamen Norton could invest his harmonies with a touch of true sentiment his success would be substantially increased. A few judicious blows in the region of the heart would be the best thing that could happen to him."

I am aware that it is not the habit of creative artists to endorse the opinion of any critic, but even a critic may sometimes be right, and there is no denying that the despair into which I fell as a result of Corinne's confession reacted most favourably upon my subsequent compositions. But for her disaffection it is unlikely that I should ever have written 'Poultry Blues,' or that popular and melancholy number 'You slipped through my fingers.'

The agonies of a lacerated heart were in some measure compensated by an accretion of royalties, the like of which I had never before enjoyed. But let it not be imagined that success obliterated sorrow. Frequently my thoughts would return to Corinne with savage regret. No longer had I the spirit to make circumferences of Central Park. Spontaneity had departed from life, and it went so hard with me that I was all but driven to take an interest in politics and submerge myself in the intellectual backwaters of Greenwich Village.

Of one thing I was determined. To have no more to do with Corinne. I do not suppose I was much worse than other men of my age and century, but I realized that I did not possess those sterling characteristics that qualify a man to prove a staunch friend to another fellow's wife.

Corinne wrote and told me that she was dedicating her life to Cyril, which, since during the year that followed they did not meet, must have proved easier of accomplishment than otherwise might have been the case. Occasionally I saw her in the distance looking wan and thwarted, and then one day her father invited me to call upon him at his flat.

From the first I saw that he was perplexed and worried. An affectation of jauntiness failed to disguise his distress.

"Well, young Norton" he said, "and what's been keepin' you away all these months?"

"Virtue, industry, and precaution," I replied.

He said —

"I'm worried about Corinne. D'you think there's anything on her mind?"

I told him to banish his fears that she did not possess a mind.

"But it isn't natural" he complained. "There hasn't been a young chap round the place these twelve months."

"Perhaps the world has grown wise," said I.

Mr Milner only shook his head and looked at me in what I can best describe as an old-fashioned way.

"The trouble began during that trip to England," he said. "I could almost give you the hour of its beginning. It was the day we left Leeds, and I sometimes ask myself whether anything occurred in that city that might explain it."

I had always known that Yorkshiremen were shrewd, and in the silence that followed I felt that Mr Milner was carrying shrewdness too far for my comfort.

"Corinne was a friend of yours" he pursued, "and it's not unlikely that she might have confessed things to you she would naturally have withheld from a parent."

I tried to be lofty.

"Why naturally, Mr Milner?"

"Something she might be ashamed of. After all, she must know that you don't possess a very high moral standard."

I was a fool to take offence and a worse fool to show it.

"Because I happened to fall in love with Corinne at a time when she was engaged to someone else does not imply that I make a practice of violating moral standards."

Mr Milner scratched his chin.

"So you do know something," said he "and that something has kept you away for the best part of a year. Now wait a minute" He paused and stared at the ceiling. "Her engagement to another fellow wouldn't discourage you, as we don't lack for proof. Then what would—what would?" His eyes fell and fastened upon mine, and his right hand smote the table a sounding blow. "By Gow! I believe I've got it."

And although I believed he had got it, too, curiosity compelled me to echo —

"Got it—got what?"

For answer he rang a bell and his secretary came into the room.

"Pilweed," said Mr Milner, "you will get on to the transatlantic telephone service and ask them to connect me with the Registrar of births, deaths, and marriages of the city of Leeds in Yorkshire."

Had Mr Milner been satisfied to degrade himself with the base suspicion that Corinne had contracted a secret marriage, it is possible I might have been able to conceal my own participation in the knowledge. But he was not satisfied. Although the order was addressed to Pilweed his eyes never for one moment deserted my face, and evidently what he saw there pricked the balloon of concealment in no uncertain manner.

"It is true, then?" he said. "Corinne is married?"

I bowed my head, as one does in dramas.

Corinne's father had complete control of himself. Without a change of tone he continued —

"Perhaps you can tell me her real name, then?"

"Mrs Knuts," I replied.

He did wince then, but only for a moment.

"There may," he said, "be some flaw in the marriage. I shall put that call through just the same. Knuts, you said? A less open-minded man than myself would say the thing was unbelievable. Knuts. That, at least, can be changed by deed poll. Good morning, Mr Norton. You have been party to a conspiracy against me. I do not suppose you will be likely to be visiting here again."

He had pressed a bell while he was talking.

"Pilweed. Mr Norton has to go immediately."

I went.

On the pavement before the block of flats I paused and drew breath. After all, what did it matter that Mr Milner had succeeded in disclosing Corinne's secret? She was lost to me for ever, and I owed her little enough in the way of consideration. Nevertheless, it hurt me to be the instrument of the disclosure. I felt that the least I could do was to put the girl on her guard, so as to give her time to armour herself against the parental offensive. This resolve had barely come to me when a large saloon car from which Corinne herself alighted drew up a few yards from where I stood. She was accompanied by a man whom I took at first glance to be a chauffeur, and at the second realized was an officer of the Air Force of considerable exterior charm. Before I had time to make my presence known he bore her hand to his mouth and kissed it with ardour. From the fact that she made no effort to prevent him I was driven to the conclusion that the gesture was not unwelcome.

Women are curiously intuitive in the presence of displeasure, which is the probable reason why she shed a glance in my direction.

"Bengy!" she exclaimed. "Why, my dear, you were coming to see me."

But that was more than I could stand.

"I beg your pardon," I said, "but in the dusk I've stuck you for a friend of mine—a Mrs. Reid."

Corinne flicked a finger to her lips and lowered a [illegible]

[illegible] Irving [illegible] Mr. Hackamore. Now you must bound to [illegible] each other [illegible] at Irving and look at me [illegible] what we [illegible] contradiction of Corinne's prophecy.

"I gotta be getting along," said he, and without more ado jumped into the car and drove off.

"Well?" said Corinne.

"Far from it," said I.

She pouted.

"A girl must have a friend, even if she is married, and now we can't be. Besides, things like Irving don't happen more'n once in a lifetime."

"When you have a husband they're not supposed to happen even as often as that."

"But what's the good of a husband three thousand miles away?"

"Now listen to me," said I. "In about ten minutes—"

And I told her exactly what had happened between her father and myself.

Any man who kids himself that he knows what a woman's reactions are likely to be is a fool. I could have sworn that my words would have thrown her into a panic, but not a bit of it.

*Tears sprang into her eyes. "Bengy!" she cried. "You mustn't go! You mustn't! I'm relying on you!"*

"Well," she said, "that brings things to a head, anyway."

I agreed that it would probably have this effect.

She sighed.

"I'm glad I've been so constant to Cyril," she murmured.

"Constant?" I said. "What about that appalling flying creature? You're incorrigible, Corinne!"

"That's not a bit fair, and I'm not. I've been awfully constant to Cyril. But when a girl's husband doesn't see her for a year and her best friend won't see her at all, something's bound to happen, if only for the sake of having a few flowers on one's table."

It was a most immoral argument, but it stabbed me to the heart.

"Corinne, Corinne," I said, "if you hadn't married that wretched poulterer I would have given you all the flowers in the world."

But Corinne only pouted.

"So you should have. Irving knows I'm married and that hasn't stopped him doing what was right."

Her fingers caressed a spray of orchids on her left shoulder. There was no excuse, but I snatched them from her dress and ground them into the paving stones. I thought she would have been furious, but she seemed quite delighted. She called me "dear Bengy," and linking an arm through mine carried me off to support her in the dreaded interview.

MR. MILNER had his back to the window when we entered the room, and since the light was behind him, it was impossible to see the expression of his face. Having no personal knowledge of the swiftness and efficiency of the trans-atlantic telephone service I had no reason to suppose that the threat uttered in my presence had already been carried out. Indeed, there was every reason to believe that it had not, for, after a moment of silence, spent in regarding Corinne, he came forward and gently encircled her shoulders with every evidence of parental affection.

"Sit down, love," he said. "I'm glad of this chance for a talk. Though what you brought young Norton for beats me."

Breathlessly and enigmatically Corinne explained that she thought I might be useful.

"That," said Mr. Milner, "is an example of the senseless optimism of your nature."

"Now, father dear," she replied, "you mustn't be bitter. We can't *all* be clever."

"No," he answered, firmly. "And some of us over-reach ourselves in the attempt."

I picked up my hat.

"Mrs. Knits," I said, "I agree with your father that the likelihood of my being in any way useful is remote. That being so, I will amuse myself in some more congenial manner."

Tears sprang into her eyes. Even with my knowledge that she can turn them on and off like a sluice, the sight never fails to move me.

"Bengy!" she cried. "You mustn't go! You mustn't! I'm relying on you."

"What for?"

"To melt father," she said. Mr. Milner laughed. "Or at least, it is kindest to call the noise he made by that name."

"When the day comes on which I am melted by Mr. Norton," he said, "I will ask to be put in a home. And now," he added, "perhaps you will tell me, Corinne, where this marriage of yours took place."

"In a register office in Leeds," she said.

"Indeed?"

At that moment Mr. Milner had a marked resemblance to a length of chilled steel. I felt that it was the time to put in some kind of plea for Corinne.

"Mr. Milner," I said, "who can tell what tricks love will play upon us? Which of us is in a position to pass judgment where Corinne's passions are concerned?"

"I am," he answered, shortly, and the few well-selected sentences with which I had proposed to continue, seemed suddenly superfluous.

"To become Mrs. Knits," I murmured feebly, "may appear to us to be a strange thing to do——"

"An impossible thing to do," he snapped. "So much so that like most impossible things, it didn't happen!"

For a moment I had the idea that grief and rage had turned Mr. Milner's head. The keenest brains snap quickest. But there were no signs of hysteria in his voice.

"No such marriage took place in Leeds. He can't have! I'll bet in that city of [illegible] he added viciously, and turned his eyes on to Corinne.

She sat, with her eyes cast down, her hands folded on her lap.

"Well, Corinne," barked Mr. Milner, "what have you got to say about it?"

"You see," she said, softly, "I thought if I took a possible name it might lead to complications—blackmail, and all that, you know! And then again I thought being Mrs. Knits would do the trick, even if the fact of being married didn't."

Mr. Milner took a cigar from his case, refraining from the common politeness of offering me one.

"Will you please explain exactly what you mean, Corinne?" he said. "What you have just said sounds perilously like nonsense."

y Google

'You see, father," she answered "I wanted to get married Only the man I wanted to marry seemed to have cooled off I can't imagine why I've never had such a thing happen with the others, and I suppose it piqued me a little'

'Oh,' repeated Mr Milner grimly It piqued you a little, did it?"

She nodded

'Well, I mean," she said, "it seemed so odd don't you think?

Amazing. I agreed

"That's what I thought" went on Corinne, imperturbably 'And then, of course, it's well known that men are much more interested in a woman if she's married They can't leave married women alone, can they?'

"I will not at the moment," said Mr Milner 'give my opinion of your inhuman cynicism and your child-like imbecility in clinging to the outworn formula of extreme youth Enough that you entertained this ridiculous idea that no man is capable of leaving a married woman alone and so pretended a marriage of your own That a child of mine should fall to such abyssmal depths of stupidity will never cease to be a source of complete mystification to me"

"You mean," said Corinne, her eyes wide, "that you think it was silly of me?'

"I was trying to give that impression" he returned

She sighed, gently

"Well, perhaps it was, she said. "But I thought it would work and even if it didn't I thought that being Mrs Knits would excite any man's pity Nobody would willingly let a girl suffer like that! Fancy a butler announcing it The degradation!'

'And supposing," said her father "that you had succeeded in exciting the pity of this half-wit with whom you say you are in love, what did you propose to do next?'

'Why stage a divorce of course,' she answered

"It never struck you that your plan was completely dishonest, deceitful, and disreputable?"

'Oh father,' she answered. "I don't think that is a very nice thing to say!" And her eyes filled with tears again

In spite of myself I couldn't help being moved again

'Corinne, dear,' I said Don't cry After all there's no harm done!

'If there is one kind of man" remarked Mr Milner 'whom I regard with utter repugnance, it is the sort of person who says 'after all, there is no harm done!'

"Mr Milner' I said, firmly, you are my elder, and you are the father of Corinne, for whom I have a great affection On both these counts I ought to do my best to respect you But I don't'

He waved his cigar, impatiently

When I have fallen so low as to want your respect Norton, I shall have lost my own

I've never known a man with such a genius for making the ordinary amenities impossible

Corinne's eyes were sparkling

Oh Bengy," she said 'have you really a great affection for me?'

Surely by now," I answered, "you must realize——'

But she cut in

"Oh, darling Bengy!" she cried, and flung her warm young arms round my neck

The voice of Mr Milner cut the air like a saw

One moment he said "This unfortunate imbecile whom you wish to marry Am I to understand that that emotion is now a thing of the past?"

"Oh father,' said Corinne, reproachfully how can you think me so fickle!"

The picture I see before me,' he replied, 'rather seems to bear out that view!"

But, you don't understand Bengy is the man

I experienced a distinct feeling of nausea; at the same time someone seemed to be playing with a thin hose of icy water up and down my spine

"You see," went on Corinne, delightedly, "Bengy is the only man I know who would marry me, and then let me do just exactly what I like. Wouldn't you, Bengy?

The idea being," I said that I should be married and that you should have a roving commission?'

She nodded smiling in a way that was positively dazing.

"That's it she said

"I shouldn't think' said Mr Milner "that even Norton with his curiously low order of intellect would be likely to buy a proposition of that kind

'Certainly not. I agreed, and I repeated it. firmly

WE were married the following week. Mrs. Milner wept. Mr Milner did not. Nor did I. but it was a near thing

Corinne remains adorable—whenever we happen to meet I have sworn many times that I owe it to my self-respect to leave her But it is a debt which I continue to owe. You see, when she *does* come home in the evening well I seem to lose my self-respect altogether But one of these days I shall pull myself together One of these days I'll drive her round Central Park again, and perhaps I'll have the luck to lose her—the darling

# THE CORAL

It is a long way from Port Moresby up to the Sea of Sulu especially in a little old ketch like the *What Not*, but a long way was nothing to Cap Halibutt, nor to Em

Em' had the soft lines of a sea slug and large eyes of a seal only, the eyes of a seal are brown and hers were grey She was fifteen in body less than that in mind and she was on deck seated on a tub turned upside down, peeling potatoes and cursing the job

Also she was dressed in old blue dungarees, and, to extenuate nothing, grubby Her dad was on the reef hunting for abalones, the greatest man in the world, but to the ordinary eye just a tough, hard bitten old salt who, had you asked him as to his past and his possessions might have answered you, speaking the truth, 'Thirty years a pearler ten thousand dollars in the Bank at Port Moresby and now on me own.'

The pearling business had been conducted as a partnership, "on me own" would mean that he had now no partner but Em who could steer, reef, and splice, besides peel potatoes Em', whose absolute faith in the godlikeness of her sire made her inevitable, so that in a sea with the waves great as houses, or with the bows of a freighter bearing down on them, a yelled order never found her wanting through fear or nerves

An absolute faith, in whose existence lies the genesis of this story and adorns with a certain humour for the reflective mind the exodus of two scoundrels

"On me own" also meant that the Cap was out of regular business had retired in fact not into an armchair after the fashion of most old gentlemen, but into a twenty-ton ketch in which he could go where he pleased, fish where he pleased I've as he pleased—and be damned to you No rates, no taxes, no neighbours, no politics no parsons, few harbour dues, and no overhead charges, except for an occasional careen or the replacement of a spar

Against those charges and the cost of stores, including whisky and tobacco, were the pickings to be had on beaches, reefs, atolls, and amongst the runways of the [illegible]

The tropic sea is a treasure house of simple things whose value is just their beauty, or strangeness, yet sometimes this beauty or strangeness has value in coin

Down in the little cabin of the *What Not* there were three orange cowrie shells picked up at Cagyan Sulu, and these shells are worth a couple of pounds apiece in the Australian market a piece of ambergris the size of a tangerine picked up on a beach of Palawan, some precious coral the shell of a nautilus and a left-twisted chank, which is the luck-shell of the Indians and so worth money All together the old man reckoned this little collection picked up casually during the last few months would be worth maybe forty pounds if marketed properly

He had struck a wreck coming up past Tumbu Matu She was hove on the rocks and looked recent, but he had left her alone there might be lots of pickings aboard of her but he wasn't out after loot of that sort—besides, it would have meant work

Meanwhile backed by the blueness of the Sulu Sea stretching towards Sibuguey was hunting on the reef for abalones. Then he straightened himself and his voice came across the water

"Got them taters done?"

"Yes, dad."

"Then leave them ready and come along off"

II

She had rowed him ashore in the dinghy and brought the little boat back It was streaming on a line, she hauled it up, got in and came over to the reef

Old man Halibutt was standing pointing to something that seemed part of the reef but wasn't.

It was square and Nature doesn't make things square

"It's the upside half of an old box

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# BOX

said the Captain, "coralled over Been trying to open it with my knife, ain't no use, no more than tryin to open an oyster with a fan

Em felt the thing with her naked foot What's in it, dad ?

Dod blister the thing howd n I know what s in it ? Old truck maybe money for all I know where's Jakin and Stanley ?

He shaded his eyes and looked over the water towards another boat lying not far from the *What Not* She was a prahu She had put in a couple of days ago, and the crew, two "nice-spoken young fellers" had chummed up with the Captain drunk his whisky, and swapped yarns with him That the prahu to the trained nose, simply stank of illicit pearling was nothing to the old man he wasn t a censor of sea morals

Hi there you blighters ' yelled the Captain across the sparkling blue. ' Kim along over here and do some work for your livin s, kim along I've found somethin

The fellows on board the prahu who had been smoking and lazing under an awning of sail-cloth, showed signs of life

A voice came on the breeze asking what was up and a voice made answer indicting laziness in terms of profanity The Cap was not a literary man, but all the same at times his language was literature

Em had heard it stated that the Cap could curse a hole in a tin pot, and with the lovely simplicity of childhood she believed it. He could do anything so why not that ? Anyhow, and however that might be he had galvanized the lotus eaters on the prahu into activity, they tumbled into their old boat and a few strokes of the oars brought them across.

Jakin was young, with straw-coloured hair and eyes set close together He was wanted in Sydney, also he was dressed in khaki shorts and nothing else Stanley was a bit older, dark, and his name might have been Moses without any strain on the possibilities

Well what s the bubble bubble ? asked Jakin. "That thing—why if it ain t an old box '

Coralled," said the Captain

"Tell us something else,' said Jakin, now on his knees and examining the find Tight as a rock and two inches thick, and we've nothing to crack it with

"Oh, I ll find you something, ' said the Cap., "if you ain t too lazy to handle the tools. Em', get aboard and bring us off the big chisel and the mallet (you'll find them in the tool chest) and that old marlin spike—and shove the taters on to bile, for I want me dinner—marlin spike s in the galley skip

Em' skipped off and the two from the prahu lit cigarettes and sat down on the warm reef whilst the Cap remained standing, loading a pipe and then lighting it

Jakin s eyes were fixed on the sea-ang as she rowed clawed on to the ketch, and then scrambled on board

He seemed thinking more of her than of the box and its possible contents, Stanley s eyes were on the box he pelted it meditatively as he sat with little bits of coral

It s most likely old truck said the Cap, but truck or boodle you can have half for the trouble of openin it

Jakin laughed Then he corrected himself

Half and half is fair play, said he, his eyes still fixed on the ketch, where Em could now be seen coming out of the galley " What s yours is mine and what s mine is yours—nothing could be fairer than that

Glad you see it," said the Cap Then taking the pipe out of his mouth he hailed the ketch with orders to hurry up, whilst Jakin looked at Stanley and grinned

## H. de Vere STACPOOLE

*Illustrated by* EDWARD OSMOND

I

NOW these two bad boys, whose last port of call was Isabela had put in towards the Sibutu reef at the sight of the anchored ketch That was three days ag

They wanted to know what she was and what she was doing. So small a boat in these waters raises questions in an inquiring mind Had she been pearling and, if s had she any stuff on board? Might it be dope for Puerto Princesa or Manila They found only Halbutt and Em'; a kindly reception, a few orange cowries and bits of precious coral and such truck—the story of a simple life and honesty Honesty in fact, was the only really valuable thing on board but it was no use to them

The ship wasn t worth robbing They had stores enough, picked up from that very same wreck that the Cap had disclaimed and they might have put out again after gazing for a day or two—only for him

The lady appeared to Jakin whilst leaving Stanley cod You never can account for tastes

She appealed so much to Jakin that in ordinary circumstances with a policeman round the corner and a church at the end of the street, he might have approached her through the Cap and if he could have concealed his criminal record may or have won her But here he was not in civilization. He was a McEv-Man in the land of the Molly-Mawks, a burg-master gull in the land where everything goes to the swiftest and the strongest and where pursuit is hopeless in the wastes of the sea.

He was going to nip off with her Nothing was easier

Halbutt was the only obstacle. To knock him on the head would be simplicity

itself but that method was not in accordance with [illegible] of [illegible]

The [illegible] bosses, there [illegible]

[illegible] her ways when [illegible] to the reef and [illegible] the box

*Jakin was on his knees, examining the find "Tight as a rock," he said, "and we've nothing to crack it with"*

IV

NOW appeared Em rowing off to them She ran the dinghy's nose on to the little strip of fine sand that formed a tiny beach and, getting out, came towards her sire with the marlin spike, mallet and chisel She had also brought off a flogging hammer on her own initiative, a thing that had been added by the Captain to the tool outfit of the *What Not* at Sourabaya where he had found it, simply asking to be picked up, on the wharf

"And now," said the Cap taking the tools, "back with you and get them taters on the boa

Then the old man proceeded to demonstrate the best means of attack

Then Stanley began to argue as to how the chisel should be used. Jakin disputing with him the Cap cutting in now and then—and time wasting

Then came the noise of a pan being beaten on board of the *What Not*

It was the dinner gong, and the sound reminded Jakin that he was hungry, so he and the other, leaving the job to be done after dinner repaired on board the prahu for food whilst the Cap repaired on board the ketch

Then silence fell on the scene whilst the two vessels lay swinging to the tide silence, broken only by an occasional burst of noise that might have come from the laughing gulls on the reef or from the prahu

V

IT was now eight bells, four o'clock in the afternoon Breakfast at seven o'clock, something to eat at noon dinner at four and a cup of cocoa and a biscuit at nine was the time-table on board the *What Not*

The Cap did not believe in canned foods he had to have them on board, but he had been brought up in youth on hard tack and the harness cask and, when possible, meals on board the *What Not* approximated to that standard as, for instance, the dinner to-day boiled salt beef and potatoes

He talked most of the time about the young fellers and their delay in getting on to the job he had set for them He didn't believe that there was anything in the box worth bothering about. It was too big for a bullion box, more likely it contained old clothes or perishable truck, still you never could tell what might be in it and it was natural to want to open it

Em concurred

She was more interested in the business than the old man She had not his vast experience of the futility that lies in the treasure-finding idea

Besides, there was no trace of any wreck on this line of reef that being so, the odds were a million to one that the box had come there as flotsam lighter than sea water and not containing gold anyhow, the coral had seized it and made it part of the reef and crusted it over—that was all

The idea of giving the nice-spoken young fellers a job of work was more in the Cap's mind when he sent for the chisel and mallet than the idea of boodle Somehow without sensing their rascality he had sensed the fundamental laziness which was its basis and resented it

Dinner over Em' set about washing up and tidying things, and her father settled himself in his bunk for a snooze

It was now near five o'clock and having finished her job she came on deck The nice-spoken young fellers had got back to the reef from the prahu, their boat was beached and they were evidently dealing with the box. The tapping of the mallet striking the chisel butt came clear on the air Then it ceased They had sighted Miss Habutt

Then Jakin's arm shot up and his voice came over the water

'Kim along' invited Jakin 'Want to show you something.'

Em did not shout a reply Afraid of waking the after-dinner sleeper below she nodded, hauled the dinghy close alongside got in and put off

She landed beside the prahu's boat hauling the dinghy up a bit then she turned to the workers

'Why you ain't got it open," said Em looking at the chipped coral

Didn't say we had." replied Jakin I called you to see what we'd done

'Well you didn't call me for much replied she I thought you'd got it open by the way you shouted Let's have a try"

She took the chisel and mallet and set to work on her knees

'Your dad's taking his snooze?' said Jakin who knew the post-prandial habits of the Cap

Yep"

Silence.

Five minutes passed in strenuous labour and then the labourer laying down the chisel and mallet, rose up and wiped her forehead

There you are,' said she. "It's not much, but it's something You can see where the lid joins the front, but I reckon it will take hours to get the stuff off so's you can lift the lid

'That's so," said Jakin, "and now that I remember there's an old crowbar on board that might come in handy I'll go and fetch it Kim along kid and have a squint at our boat, you haven't been aboard her yet have you?"

'No' said Em'

She had wanted to board the prahu and look round her. The dirty-looking craft filled her with special interest because it was owned and manned by white men. She had seen lots of prahus before—they had interested her, but she had never felt the urge to board them—they were native boats, and her contempt for the natives reduced the glamour of his boat.

They pushed off in the dinghy—Em rowing, proud to show off—and in a minute they were alongside the prahu and on board.

It had been converted in a lot of ways—small and perhaps originally undecked—it had now a deck of teak with a cabin below reached by a well—and whilst Jakin went to look for the crowbar in the cabin, Em looked about her. She was fascinated by the compass fixed in the roughest manner. It was Chinese—just a round wooden box—no card, the needle trembling on a pivot and around the edge Chinese ideographs representing the points.

She was wondering how they managed to navigate with this thing when up from the cabin came Jakin—

"Can't find the durned thing," said he. "Stick here a minute while I get ashore and ask Stanley."

He plumped over into the dinghy and pushed off.

Em watched him rowing, without the faintest shadow of a suspicion of danger. She turned her attention to the things around her, exhausted the interest in the deck and then popped below for a moment to look at the cabin.

VI

"WELL, that's done," said Jakin, as he beached the dinghy. "Old chap bottled on the ketch she aboard and no trouble."

Stanley rose from his work.

"Come on," said he, "and have a go at this pesky box. I'm not going to leave here without having a look in—there's lots of time—neither of them can swim because of the sharks."

"Suppose the old blighter knocks the shackle off the anchor chain and comes drift'n' in?" said Jakin.

"If he did the current wouldn't bring him ashore, he'd drift out east. Come on and don't stand jawing—it's near sundown."

Jakin got down and began to work.

He wanted to get away without any rough work with old Halbutt. The thing was going beautifully—the area-sneak had the milk bottle in his pocket and all he had to do was to walk away with it.

On the other hand, cupidity held him and the fact that the wind had fallen dead removed the last chance of danger from Halbutt.

"I don't believe there's anything in the cursed thing," said he, as he laboured, "and I wouldn't give it another tap of the mallet only that the wind's gone. You forgot one thing, if old Whiskers dropped his anchor chain he needn't go driftin' east as you said—not if he had any wind—he could put sail on her and pile her ashore to get at us—or chase us. As it is, we can get out usin' the sweeps. We've got the game in our hands and I tell you, come a breath of wind I'm off."

"It's going to last," said the other, referring to the calm and raising his head as though to sniff it. "Anyhow, it'll last long enough for us—and the girl's making no trouble."

This was a fact.

Em, expecting Jakin to return for the crowbar, having found out from Stanley where it was likely to be hidden, waited and watched, not bothering but a bit perplexed. She saw him now taking over the work from the other and the faint and faraway sound of the rapid blows of the mallet came across the water. Evidently Stanley had been able to give him no indication as to where about the tool might be, and they had determined to work without it—all the same he might have come back and told her and fetched her off and not left her stuck on board like this.

She hailed them, and despite the distance they must have heard her voice, for she saw Stanley raise his hand in recognition, as much as to say "All right, we haven't forgotten you."

Yes, that was all very well, but it wasn't satisfactory to be treated like that as if she wasn't worth bothering about. Never for a moment did she feel any sense of danger—nothing but impotence turning to irritation—till, just as she recognized that the sun was near its setting, there came to her a vague uneasiness never felt before.

Almost instantly dispelled, for just at that moment appeared on the deck of the *What Not* the greatest man in the world. The sight of whom made everything all right and at once except for the dread of a skelping.

She recognized now that she had done wrong in taking the dinghy, going ashore and leaving the ship whilst he was asleep.

However, what was done couldn't be undone, even if it entailed punishment with a rope's end, by the Cap., who had roused himself and come on deck.

Being a sailor, the first thing he noticed was the dead calm—no wind. Then the fact that Em wasn't on deck and that she hadn't been below.

Then the dinghy on the beach beside the prahu boat and the two fellers at work Then the fact that the sun was just on its setting and that the prahu in the full blaze of the level light showed Em on its deck a little figure that raised a hand to him What in the nation was she doing there What was the dinghy doing on the beach?

Then he hailed the reef, What the— ation?

The reply came back across the water Jakin's voice advising him to keep his whiskers on

Then he knew, at least he guessed something of the truth

They'd got the dinghy, were dealing with the box, possibly had found that it contained boodle, and were jeering at him

He couldn't get at them. Sharks, and worse than that, he couldn't swim. There was no wind, so he couldn't say the *Ilsa Nol* ashore or reach the prahu under sail. If they found, or had found, boodle, they would skip with it, and that was their object sure.

Strangely enough, it did not seem to him that Em also might be their object They would put her back on the reef before they skipped—that seemed in the nature of things and it seemed underscored by the

*"Can't find the crowbar," said Jakin, coming up from the cabin. "Stick here a minute while I get ashore and ask Stanley"*

desperate energy with which they were working at their task, judging by the sound of the mallet—they had no idea seemingly of anything else.

He paced the little deck for a moment in silence whilst the sun touched the sea line. Then, disregarding the fellers on the reef, he cupped his hands and hailed the prahu, which was just within hailing distance.

"What made you take the dinghy—now—how in the nation did you get there?"

A reedy treble made answer that "they" had asked her to come to the reef, and then she had come aboard and they'd gone back and left her.

"Hell!" said the Captain.

He resumed pacing the deck whilst out sprang the dark, followed by the stars.

VII

WITH the death of the wind the heat over and around the Sibitu reef had increased. The sea ran oily and smooth, with snakes of phosphorescence

where the current took the water past the counter and the air though unmisted had in it some vanity that gave dullness to the starlight as though the heat rays were opposing in some way the light rays

The reef was visible, and the figures upon it could be seen, but indistinctly the sounds of the market however came clearly defined advertising to all with ears or auditory sense organs that men were working on the reef

There were other sounds

The Cap had got his profanity full going. It was less language than lightning The personal descriptions, linked with curses, reflections on the ancestry of the accursed and hopes of their embowment, burning eternal and scorning alive came to him as she watched and listened with a sense of comfort, mixed with admiration

She had never heard any approach this, even the sea people seemed anxious to hear for, now, she saw with a leisurely lifting movement something like a great black slug coming out of the water on to the coral and another on the other side of the reef they were all spangled with phosphorescence, and throwing the spangles off in vaguely glittering drops

The Cap's profanity had suddenly ceased as though a hand had been clapped over his mouth. Then came his voice across the water raised to a yell

'Run you blighters Run you blighters! Run! Run Run!

## VIII

WORKING regardless of the language from the ketch Stanley had just burst up the box lid to find nothing but emptiness when the call to run came to him

They didn't notice, they were cursing their luck till a sound as of washerwomen sloshing about in a flooded laundry made them turn

Then they saw what you may see yourself if you go by night in calm weather to Sibutu reef of Agio reef those two great crabbing grounds of the Sulu Sea, and sit there and hammer coral to advertise your presence

They saw two shapes like rum barrels, only longer, and fitted in their front parts with motor-car headlights dimmed to a pulsating glow

Run, you blighters—run—run," again came the voice of the Cap and they started

Something like a whiplash caught Jakin by the foot tripped him, and flung him down another caught Stanley right round both knees. Their screams made Halibutt throw up his hands

No use in telling them to run now He saw their dim forms resisting and being dragged about over the coral as if to the pull of ropes, but always towards the water protesting crying out for help before being snatched into silence and the sea

Lord love us' said the Cap Then bellowing in the direction of the prahu and with a crack in his voice.—

Hi! did ye see that?

The answer came in the affirmative followed by inarticulate sounds.

What ails you?

I'm frit'

Garn nothin' to be frightened of, them things can't get at you. Get down below and get asleep—nothing to be done till the wind comes and that won't come till marnin

## IX

IT didn't, even then. The sun rose on the still perfect calm, the ketch and the prahu and the reef and the two boats on the reef, and also on the comic opera position of old man Halibutt and his daughter, able to converse by shouting but unable to meet

Come the wind the Captain determined to put a bit of sail on the ketch and lay her alongside the prahu, anchor and then either raising her lateen sail or with the sweeps he knew to be aboard of her put the prahu on the beach and so be able to secure the dinghy

Later in the day towards noon the wind rising he said this

Em had come with him ashore and watched him as he stood contemplating the empty box

She implicitly believed that he had cleared the danger away somehow by his presence by his voice by his curses. She had told him the details of what had happened of how she had been invited to land and then taken off to the prahu and the whole method and manner of the thing and Halibutt could now gauge more clearly the size of the rascality of the two nice-spoken young fellers. All pity had vanished

'I wish I had them two brutes in front of me to give them my mind," said he. 'know'n what I know'

"I guess you cussed them last night proper said Em "I was listenin

Yep, and it's the Bible truth that cusses like chickens come home to roost. You always remember that and what you've seen'

"But them things weren't chickens dad" objected the implicit Em

'No,' said he but they was cusses anyway for them two chaps Now, come along an' help to get the dinghy off'

# SIGNS OF THE TIMES

By BERNARD DARWIN

*A fine example of the modern sign-painter's art, by Ralph Ellis, at Atcham, near Shrewsbury*

ANYBODY who has any feeling for the romance of the road must rejoice to see that with the renaissance of many old coaching inns there has come a corresponding renaissance of signboards. How sad and dull it is merely to see the bald words 'The Red Lion' when there might be a picture of that nobly rampacious animal. The truly romantic traveller would almost rather drink bad beer under the shadow of a genuine signboard, than good beer where there are nothing but gold letters.

There have been many Marquises of Granby, besides the one kept by the elder Mr Weller at Dorking, but fewer and fewer of these have had signboards 'representing the head and shoulders of a gentleman with an apoplectic countenance, in a red coat, with deep blue facings, and a touch of the same over his three-cornered hat, for a sky with a pair of flags over his head and a couple of cannon underneath, his last gold button. We may hope, however, that there is now a good time coming.

When I was a small boy I used to go riding on a pony along the roads near Cambridge. I marked down eagerly every new name of an inn that I saw, and when I got home I wrote it down in a laborious round hand and a little black note-book—a precious book which I even now possess in the sense that it is somewhere in the house, but I cannot find it. Nothing was too dull or too humble to be put in—not even a bleak little 'Railway Hotel' by a village station, but naturally some were much more highly prized than others. There was, for instance, one really famous sign. 'The Man loaded with Mischief'—a picture of a man carrying his wife on his back. Alas! the old house on the Madingley Road is now pulled down, but it is pleasant

*A modern humorous sign, by Ralph Ellis, in Sussex.*

*Queen Elizabeth is to-day as popular as ever as the model for The Queen's Head An inn sign at Chiswick*

to know that the signboard is preserved in a Cambridge museum. I loved it very much, but I think I loved still better the "Defreville Arms," in Shelford, with, as they seem in memory at any rate, its many and gorgeous quarterings. Indeed, I still think that a really good coat of arms is worth almost more than the greenest of men or dragons, more even than a Moon and Seven Stars. Every ride to a new village meant the hope of a new sign and I "murmured a little sadly" when there was nothing but a White Hart or a Black Horse that I had already inscribed. I played the game very honestly, too, and never wrote down a name but those seen with my own eyes. Sometimes the temptation was great. Somewhere near Wicken Fen was a name celebrated and unique, "Five Miles from Anywhere and No Hurry," but that was too far off for my rides, so it could not go into the collection. A book on signs given by one of the kind grown-ups was almost more bitter than sweet. It was like those lovely tantalising catalogues of stamps holding so many rarities hopelessly out of reach.

Those grown-ups were then lamenting that signboards were not what they had been in their young days and no doubt I was born into a decadent age, but at any rate, as the pictures in this article will show, I have survived to see a new era beginning.

It is not all the new signs that the more conservative among us will be able to approve. Now and then, though painted with obviously greater skill than the old ones, they yet lack something of the old direct appeal. The old sign-painter, as it seems to me, was not always very skilful, but he was a serious, single-minded person. He was told to paint a black horse and he painted one as well as he possibly could. It was very elegant and very much arched as to the neck and perhaps not very like a black horse, but it was. Like its creator, serious and single-minded. Now and again the moderns seem to me to try to put into a signboard more than it can carry. A rose and crown, when all is said, ought only to be a rose and crown, beautiful in their simplicity, a red lion that strives to convey too much wears

*A Green Man of 1650. The name is variously supposed to be derived from a genuine wild man of the woods or simply a forester*

*Who but Henry VIII could be so suitable for The King's Head? A Chichester sign by Ralph Ellis*

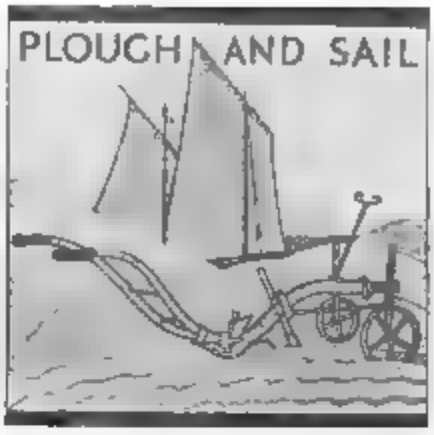
a tortured and uneasy air, he ought to be a natural, bold well-fed self-satisfied animal with not too much of the grotesque about him he should not look as if he had something on his mind. I have seen lions of whom it may be said, as Count Hoggenarmo did in 'The Rose and the Ring,' "They are only little boys dressed up in doormats."

Again, it is possible to be too realistic. The best signs possess a certain formal and

*A vigorous treatment of the Robin Hood story by H. G. Theaker, at Cherry Hinton, Cambridgeshire*

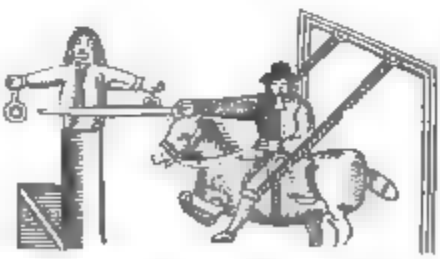
symbolic quality. As an example I dare to say that Mr. Ralph Edis's little pigs are charming little pigs, but they lack the real signboard touch. They are perhaps too like little pigs. On the other hand in his 'Plough and Sail' he has got the authentic quality. To make these remarks is not, I hope, to be too critical. It is only tentatively to point out mistakes into which the sign painter may fall. It is not to be expected that he should only follow slavishly his predecessors. It would be dull if he did, and all artists must explore avenues" and not stand still.

Those who have taken in these days to

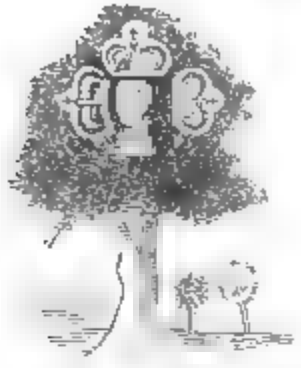



*The artist has captured the authentic signboard touch in this sign at Lyminster, Sussex*

painting signs are genuine artists, but this is not, as might be supposed, a new state of things. In the eighteenth century there was a regular race of sign-painters who had their studios for the most part in Harp Alley, Shoe Lane. They did good work, but not so good as did the coach-painters. When rich men had their coaches and their sedan-chairs, they liked to have all manner of subjects painted on the panels. This was the work of the coach-painters; they were really skilful men; they proved their skill when they turned to sign painting, and they were apparently well paid for their work. One Clarkson is said to have been paid £500 for a sign of Shakespeare in Little Russel Street, Drury Lane. Others known to fame were Catton, Baker (a member of the Royal Academy at its foundation), Cipriani, a Florentine carriage-painter and Royal



*A Flying Horse of 1720. The rider on the swing is endeavouring to remove one of the rings from the dummy's hands with his sword.*



*A Royal Oak of 1660 commemorating Charles II's escape at Boscobel nine years earlier*

Academician Whale, R.A., Smithe, R.A., and Mommy who painted ships on the carriage of Admiral Byng

*The knights are dust*
*And their good swords are rust,*

but their names are still preserved in Larwood and Hotten's History of Sign Boards, an admirable work now some sixty-one years old. There too, may be found the names of the truly great who occasionally stooped to this lower but yet romantic branch of art. Hogarth painted the original Man Loaded with Mischief not my old Cambridge friend which was I suppose a copy but one in Oxford Street. Morland painted a Goat in Boots in the Fulham Road, and several others. Richard Wilson the elder Crome David Cox there are more great names, and of the younger generation Mulais painted a George and Dragon with grapes round it at Hayes in Kent.

So the modern sign-painters have a fine tradition and a high standard to live up to. One of the most prolific of them is Mr. Ralph Ellis, of whose work several examples are given here. *Les bons chiens chassent de race* and it is pleasant to learn that his is an hereditary business and an hereditary talent, for his father though perhaps better known as a naturalist, was a Sussex sign painter. Mr. Ellis, who worked at the Slade School and afterwards in Paris, began painting signs after the War and has been painting them ever since.

Personally of all his signs that I have seen I like best his Queen's Head which is, of course, Queen Elizabeth, and his King's Head, which is Henry VIII. He had, perhaps, here less scope for originality but how excellently he has maintained the old tradition. If Mr. Ellis had lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth he might have had an anxious time of it, for she sometimes did not like the portraits of herself on signboards, and in that case, according to Sir Walter Raleigh ordered them to be knocked in pieces and cast into the fire. Furthermore, she made a proclamation about her portraits that "some coming persons mete therefore shal shortly make a pourtrait of hir person or visage, and that afterwards other painters and gravers should follow it; meanwhile they had better mind what they were about."

As Queen Elizabeth was for centuries the most popular model for the Queen's Head, so was Henry VIII for a King's Head, and certainly no English monarch has ever looked more thoroughly jovial and a more obvious encourager of conviviality.

*Charles's famous adventure remains the inspiration of The Royal Oak in this modern sign at Knockholt, Kent.*

Another of Mr. Ellis's signs which contains a portrait is that of the Mytton and Mermaid. The Mermaid is, of course, one of the oldest inn signs. There was a famous one as early as the fifteenth century and Beaumont wrote to Ben Jonson —

*What things have we seen*
*Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been*
*So nimble and so full of subtle flame*

To join the Mermaid with another sign is legitimate art, as we know from many examples, and the famous Jack Mytton was mated with this one because the inn is at Atcham in Shropshire near to the Squire of Halston's old home. He deserves to be remembered for many things, but I like best his remark to a nervous friend when driving in a gig. "What, never upset in a gig! What a d——d slow fellow you must have been all your life!" And up went the wheel on the bank and over went the gig.

Mr. Ellis has painted another king's portrait in his Royal Oak at Knockholt in Kent, and thereby reminded its patrons of a little history at the same time. The oak has always been the most popular of trees for inn signs. After Charles II's escape at Boscobel many of the oaks became royal, and occasionally the inn was named "King Charles in the Oak." Incidentally David Cox painted a Royal Oak at Bettws-y-Coed, which is, I believe, still preserved.

*An old engraving of "The Man Loaded with Mischief," after Hogarth's sign for an inn in Oxford Street*

Yet another celebrity, or rather a group of celebrities, is depicted by Mr. T. H. Newberry, a Dorsetshire painter and Emeritus Professor of the Glasgow School of Art. This is the Shah of Persia at Longfleet. The sign has, as will be seen, four sides. On each is depicted a famous personage, Jamshyd the Glorious, Rustum the Warrior, Bahram the Hunter, and our old friend Omar Khayyám. I suppose this became a popular sign at the time when "Have you seen the Shah?" was a stock joke, but there had been earlier examples, for in the middle of the eighteenth century there was an inn at Newcastle called the Kouli Kan. His other name was Nadir Shah; he began life as a robber and ended it on a throne, and he was popular for allowing Englishmen

*A giant old sign with the inscription, "Help me through this world."*

*This sign by Ralph Ellis at Broad Halfpenny Down, Hampshire, the cradle of cricket, commemorates John Nyren, historian of the famous Hambledon Club*

to trade in Persia. There were also Great Moguls and Indian Kings, but the most popular foreign potentate in his day was Frederick the Great. Just as at one time every White Boar (which was King Richard III's favourite badge) became for political reasons a Blue Boar so poor old Admiral Vernon, no longer a popular hero, was given a lick or two of fresh paint and called the King of Prussia.

These portrait signs seem to be the most popular with the new school and, incidentally, it is pleasant to know that the Bat and Ball at Hambledon, that earliest home of cricket, now possesses on its signboard a portrait of old John Nyren who, by his immortal book made immortal that little Hampshire village and its cricket ground of Broad Halfpenny.

At the same time the new painters are far from having forgotten some of the other traditional signs of a different type. Mr Newberry has, for instance, painted a Rose and Crown at Longburton in Dorsetshire for the same brewers who own the Shah of Persia. Look, also, at the modern rendering at Cherry Hinton, near Cambridge of the old and honourable theme of Robin Hood and Little John, with Maid Marian in the background. This is by Mr. Theaker the Principal of the Polytechnic School of Art. Robin Hood and the Green Man were once, I take it, more or less interchangeable signs, for Robin was the type of all foresters that wore Lincoln green. Yet it seems that all Green Men were not foresters. Some of them were the Wild Men, or Savages, who appeared regularly in ancient pageants. On this particular sign at Cherry Hinton are written the traditional lines —

*Ye gentlemen and Archers good*
*Come in and drink with Robin Hood*
*If Robin Hood be not at home*
*Come in and drink with Little John*

Signboards have to stand wind and weather, and probably each one of us has in his mind some friendly picture on a familiar road that has almost faded away. When Mr Pickwick and Sam went to look for Mr Lowten at his favourite tavern they found a 'weather beaten' signboard bearing "the half-obliterated semblance of a magpie intently eyeing a crooked streak of brown paint which the neighbours had been taught from infancy to consider as the stump." The materials of a signboard become therefore important, and the new race of painters has experimented. Mr Danckel has tried linoleum and glass, and Mr Ellis prefers copper even to the hardest wood. A fresh and interesting departure is the use of pottery plaques. A Green King, designed by Mr George Kruger Gray, is carried out in glazed Doulton Ware. This most engaging king is wearing not a red or blue robe as kings usually do but a green one, and constitutes a play upon the name of the brewers, Messrs Greene King. This is quite as it should be — puns and plays on words were fashionable on signboards from the oldest times and Larwood and Hotten give a long list of them. One John Drinkwater had a fountain for a sign, Mr Woodcock had a cock sitting on a bundle of wood. There was a Mr Geese who had Three Geese and Elinor Gander, who kept the Gander. Finally, Mr Green painted his doorposts green and called the house The Green Posts. So the Suffolk brewers are living up to the best traditions of this fine old art.

# MINNIE THE MONK

## W. TOWNEND

*Illustrated by ERIC FRASER*

CAPTAIN MYERS of the s.s. *Kolbar*, whom I had always regarded as one of the most unapproachable men alive, greeted me so warmly that I was startled. He shook hands and said —

"Glad to see you again, mister. You'll stay and have a bite to eat, won't you?" He then hesitated, as though he had remembered something important, and spoke to Mr Truscott the chief engineer.

"I think I'd better see how she's making out." As he climbed the ladder to his quarters on the lower bridge he added —

'I've got responsibilities now haven't I?"

"You certainly have," said the chief engineer, dryly.

He led the way to his room.

'Sit down an' make yourself at home, he said.

'When did Captain Myers marry?" I asked.

"Who told you he was married?"

"Isn't he?"

Mr Truscott leaned back in his chair with his legs dangling, and gazed in a far-off manner through the port over his bunk and puffed at his pipe. His round, plump face was grave. He ran his fingers through his dark wire-like hair.

'It's a long story," he said.

"Begin at the beginning," I said.

"It would take too long. If I begin less than four weeks ago at the Weehawken Elevator where we were loading grain it'll be all you need hear.

'We'd been dining ashore in New York, in a place the old man knew in West Forty Second Street, near Times Square, and it was near midnight when we crossed the railway lines and came on board, sober both of us so far as outward appearance went, but a trifle oppressed by having mixed our drinks on top of a meal we could have done without. Italian cooking never agrees with me if I have to drink after it. And say what you like three-weeks-old Scotch whisky manufactured in Harlem with labels specially imported from Glasgow, on top of a couple of bottles of red wine never done a man any good and never will, not if you finish up with Schnapps, like the old man insisted —for the good of our digestions, he said.

"Well we said good night. The old man went to his room. I lingered a while on the bridge-deck to look at the lights of New York across the river, and the moon, and to have a last pipe before turning in. I was thinking how peaceful it all was and how soothing to be a chief engineer and not have to be perpetually listening to the beat of the engines, when all of a sudden I heard a screech from the old man's room and I ran up the ladder as fast as I could, followed

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by the night watchman and there I saw—well you'd never believe it—not even you would—never!"

"What did you see?" I said

I saw the wreckage of a once neat and tidy room. I saw the desk strewn with pieces of paper and torn charts and books and broken glass and [illegible] and I saw the old man leaning against the after-bulkhead. And I seen—I saw—on the table, mister what I thought for a moment was a—a what d'you call it—a phantasm—an illusion—well if you get what I mean. I'd mixed my drinks considerable, and when I saw Minnie seated on the edge of the table with a book in her hands and wearing a leather belt around her

*"I saw the old man, looking wild-eyed and distracted And I saw on the table, mister, what I thought for a moment was a—a phantasm —an illusion"*

waist and nothing else, I was so taken aback I just sat down on the settee and couldn't speak. I just couldn't say a word . . .'

"'Seems a sketchy costume even for New York,' I said

If you mean you think Minnie was a young female,' said the chief engineer, rather severely, she wasn't That is to say she was, but not a young female human. Minnie was a monkey a little brown monkey with the most appealing eyes you ever saw and the whitest teeth and a disposition and temper inherited from her grandfather, who was Satan himself Yes, mister that was Minnie Minnie, the monk. And she'd broken loose from wherever it was she'd been chained and she'd just about ruined the old man's room He was mad He said Chief, I'm going to kill that dam' monkey' I said How? 'How!' he said. 'You just watch'

Well, mister I've seen comical things in my time, but I've never seen nothing more comical than Captain Myers trying to catch Minnie. He made a grab at her sudden, and Minnie dropped on to the deck and looked at him with her head on one side. He clutched at her with both hands, and Minnie grinned—it's the truth—she grinned—and jumped out of his reach and sat on the back of a chair and told him what she thought of him And then he moved round the table very slow and cautious on tiptoe, the poor fish and grabbed, and Minnie dropped on to the deck and jumped on to the table again and threw an ink-well on to the deck and then dodged triumphant into the bedroom. He slammed the door after her and sat down, and said —

"'I don't feel at all well

I'm not surprised' I said

'There'll be trouble over this,' he said Look at all this mess Who's responsible?'

"'The monk, I said

"'Sure, but who's going to compensate me for the damage she's done?'

No one, I said. 'You been going to sea long enough now to know that, haven't you?'

"'Yes,' he said, kind of mournful, 'yes. I'll pay. I always do. You'd better go now, Mr Fruscott, and leave me. I'm going to turn in on the settee. God!' he said, starting to his feet. 'What's that?'

From the bedroom we heard a crash like glass being broke wholesale. I went to the door but he stopped me.

'No,' he said, 'let the little devil be. I don't feel up to chasing round after a monkey to-night.'

"EARLY next day when I came on deck, feeling just about as bad as I always do the morning after the night before, I was just in time to hear the old man say to the steward outside the starboard saloon alleyway.

'Steward, there's a monkey in my bedroom.'

'In yer bedroom, sir?' the steward said, opening his eyes very wide. 'A monkey!'

'Yes, a monkey. Get rid of her!'

'Me, sir?' said the steward, who didn't relish the job. ''Ow?'

The old man considered. And then he pointed to an Italian steamer moored astern of the *Kolbar*, and said:

'Give her to someone on board that ship.'

The steward went into the old man's bedroom and we heard sounds of breakage, and the old man sighed and resigned himself to more damage; and by and by the steward come out, holding the monkey in his arms, half in and half out of a pillow-case, and clawing. As soon as she seen the old man she screeched and tried to get at him.

'"I do believe,' said the old man, kind of startled, 'the monk likes me.'

'She does,' I said. 'She wants you to save her.'

He waved the steward away.

'Take her out of my sight,' he said, 'and give her to someone and get back on board as quick as you can. I want my breakfast.'

And then he went into what remained of his bedroom to shave and dress.

Nothing much happened till he went ashore after breakfast to go to the agent's office, and the second mate went aft to the store room in the poop. I saw him, and wondered what he was up to. He come back a couple of minutes after asking a hands if they'd seen his monkey. I said:

'What monkey, Mr Effingham?'

'A monkey I bought,' he said. 'Her name's Minnie. I bought her for five dollars to give to someone as a present when we reach London.'

'"A lady?" I said.

'"Why not?" he said.

'But a monk!' I said.

'She wanted one,' he said. 'You don't happen to know where she is, do you?'

'My lad,' I said, 'you've said good-by to that monk. She's on board yon Italian steamer. The old man found her in his room last night and he told the steward to get her away. Understand? You've lost her.'

The second mate didn't say a word. He couldn't. He turned on his heel and walked down the gangway to the wharf, and that was the last I saw of him for half an hour or so till I heard the mess-room steward tell the fourth engineer if he wanted to see the funniest thing outside Newcastle on a Sunday he'd better make haste because our second mate was fighting a dago for a monkey.

I went on deck, and there, just as the mess-room steward had said, there was the second mate scrapping with a dark-skinned man in a white jacket and black trousers, the steward of that there Italian steamer, with Minnie, the monk, clinging to his shoulders, terrified, and screeching blue murder. Life had not much to offer us when we saw the old man come marching along the quay.

'Mr Effingham,' he said, 'what the devil's the meaning of this?' and the second mate said: 'This man's got my monkey, sir.' The old man said: 'It's not your monkey, it's his. Go on board this minute.'

The second mate tried to say something, but the old man wouldn't listen, and came on board the ship. He said: 'Chief, we want steam in half an hour,' and I said: 'Very good, sir,' and the second mate said: 'I beg your pardon, sir, but about that there monkey. She's mine. I bought her.'

'That monkey,' said the old man, 'was loose in my quarters last night. She did about twenty pounds' worth of damage. I told the steward to take her ashore and give her away.'

"'I'm sorry she got loose, sir,' the second mate said, 'but it wasn't my fault, honest it wasn't.'

'Whose fault was it, then?' said the old man. 'Mine?'

'No, sir, certainly not,' said the second, 'but I bought that monkey yesterday afternoon, sir, from a Greek, as a present for a young lady, sir.'

'You've no right to buy monkeys for young ladies,' said the old man, quite sharply.

'One monkey,' said the second mate, 'that's all, sir,' and the old man nearly bit his head off because he thought he was trying to be funny, till he said: 'I bought the monkey for Miss Merridew, sir.'

"You don't know about Julia Merridew, do you? She's the daughter of old Charlie Merridew the firm's London superintendent, responsible for care and upkeep and so on while we're discharging at Millwall or Surrey Commercial Docks or anywhere else on the river. Julia's twenty-five and about as pretty and nice-spoken a girl as you'd find if you looked for a couple of years. It's her own fault she hasn't married ages ago, for if she's been asked once, she's been asked a dozen times by men who could give her everything a wife wants to make her happy."

"What did you go and buy a monkey for Miss Merridew for?" said Captain Myers.

*"'It's my impression, Mr Effingham, you've ill-treated her,' said the Captain. 'You must have. Why else should she be frightened?'"*

She asked for one sir said the second mate

Don t talk like a dam fool ' said the old man

" ' It's the truth sir said the second She asked me to buy her a monkey and yesterday I found one It cost me five dollars If I go to London without one, Miss Merridew will think I don t pay any attention to what she says

The old man got quite red in the face and he said

' Get the monkey back There s the pilot coming on board Make haste ' But the second mate said in a sheepish scared way

I ve tried sir He won t let me have her back under twenty dollars

Without saying a word, Captain Myers hurried down the gangway to the wharf where the Italian steward in his white jacket and black trousers was walking up and down arguing with Minnie who was trying to get away from him and not succeeding

' I followed the old man, not wishing to miss what was coming next, and so I heard what he said

' That s my monkey he said. I want her

' Twenty dol said the Italian

' I won't give you twenty I ll give you ten ' said the old man

The Italian laughed and gave Minnie a smack on the face to stop her trying to bite him, and the old man said

Don t you be cruel to dumb animals my man or you'll get into trouble

Twenty-five doll ' said the Italian

' Twenty-five ' said the old man ' You said twenty

I say twent , now I say twent five said the Italian in annozzer minute I say t irty '

Captain Myers was so angry he began to shout

It's a hold-up,' he yelled ' the monk isn t worth it I won t pay a penny

T irty doll', said the Italian And by now there was a crowd of about a hundred listening, and all of em, without exception, laughing fit to beat the band at the spectacle of the old man and the Italian bargaining for M nnie, the monk You buya da monk for t irty doll the Ital an said

The old man paid the money and said ' Mr Effingham, take her ' But the monkey had different ideas The Italian loosed his hold on her neck, and she made one spring into the old man s arms and clung to him whimpering and once more he was red in the face and the crowd yelled. He said

' Why the hell can't one of you dam' fools take her away ? but no one could, because we couldn t have pried her off him just then without we d made use of a crowbar The old man had to carry her to his room, and there managed by the aid of a steward and a ripe banana to get rid of her so he could go to the bridge, where the pilot was waiting to take the *Kolbar* out of New York harbour

NEXT day the old man asked me what he should do. We sat in his day-room, and Minnie was jumping about from the table to the settee and the settee to the bookshelves, examining things and tearing newspapers and magazines and throwing books on to the deck and trying to eat shoes and so on, like an inquisitive child

She don t give me a minute s peace he said

Get rid of her, I said ' Give her back to the second mate After all, I said he bought her didn t he ? '

" The old man looked at me kind of reflective

" ' He bought her for five dollars,' he said, I bought her for thirty Who does the monkey belong to, him or me ? '

" ' If you look at it like that, I said you Keep her, then.

" ' But I don t want to,' he said He went to the door of his room and called Mr Effingham, come here a minute will you, please ? ' The next minute the second mate was in the room and the monkey was sitting on the settee, jabbering

" ' Mr Effingham, said the old man. take your monkey out of here, please and in future look after her and don t let her stray

' Thank you, sir said the second mate I'll be most careful He put his hand out and tried to take hold of her, and then he yelled and jumped back, and Minnie jabbered, and he said She s bit me His fingers were bleeding He said I can t do anything with her,' he said. He was scared

' The old man said —

She s as mild and quiet and well-behaved a monk as I ever met Why can't you handle her properly without making her angry ? Look at this ! ' He lifted the monkey up and put her on his shoulder where she sat making faces at the second mate ' Take her, mister She s yours

Again the second mate tried to take her but M nnie showed her teeth, and the old man said

" ' It s my impression Mr Effingham you ve ill-treated her You must have Why else should she be frightened ? '

" ' I didn't ill-treat her, sir ' said the second mate ' that's the solemn truth, sir I didn t, truly '

*"'There,' said the Captain, 'there, Miss Julia, is a little present for you with my love.'"*

"'Then why don't she go to you?' the old man said. 'Well, she's my monkey now. I'll look after her. You may go.' When the second mate had gone, looking kind of sickish, the old man said, 'If someone's got to take that monk home and give her to Miss Merridew, why not me? I paid for her, didn't I?' And then he looked very serious and said, more to himself than to me: 'Maybe it will help!'

'I knew from that what he was thinking and I wondered what chance he'd have of getting Julia Merridew for a wife and what kind of life she'd have with a man of forty-five, who'd been a widower for ten years, as a husband!

"'It'll please her,' he said. 'Yes, I'll give her the monk as soon as we reach London.'

'I'm not over fond of pet animals at any time, but on board ship—to my way of thinking—they're impossible. The one thing that made Minnie the monk tolerable was she was funny. You had to laugh watching her. She was, what you might call, a caricature of everything human. She was destructive and mischievous, and she knew just how far she could go without being killed, and she knew, too, for a fact, no matter how angry fellas got with her she'd only to reach the old man and she was safe.

'Life wasn't easy for anyone, not even the old man, whose belongings Minnie regarded as her own to do as she liked with, which meant tearing or chewing things to bits by way of experiment. He didn't complain, not much, anyhow, till she learned the trick of striking matches, and then when he found her burning an old newspaper in his day-room he put his foot down. While he was on the bridge the steward must look after her. The steward, who'd been with him fifteen years on and off, and had never refused to obey an order in his life, locked her into the pantry, and went to the galley. In the five minutes he was away she'd smashed every bit of crockery she could lay her hands on. You never seen such a mess in your life. the deck covered with pieces of broken plates and cups and saucers and glass, with Minnie looking as good as gold sitting on a shelf dipping her fingers into a pot of strawberry jam and chattering to herself about, I guess, the paradise for monkeys she'd reached.

The steward didn't waste any time losing his temper. What was was, kind of, Kismet. He took Minnie to the galley and handed her over to the cook while he cleaned up the breakages. The cook, who was a lover of dumb animals, gave her an apple to eat, and went on with his work.

"When the old man came off the bridge he went to the pantry for Minnie. The steward, who was on hands and knees, picking the pieces of broken china from off the deck, explained he'd given the monk into the charge of the cook. The old man was annoyed at that. He was still more annoyed when he reached the galley in time to hear a yell of agony from Minnie and found her sucking her hand which she'd scalded putting it into a stewpan of figs simmering on the stove.

"The old man accused the cook and the steward of conspiring to hurt a poor dumb animal who'd never done them no harm, and the monk clung to his neck and scolded and told him her

"FOR three days life was all quiet and peaceful on board. The weather was wonderful. The North Atlantic was as calm as the Bosphorus in mid-summer. Minnie was sick with a bandaged hand. On the fourth day she was out and about, restored to health, but as the old man said not her usual cheery self. She was subdued and thoughtful. She'd learned her lesson.

"It was a fine day and the sun was shining and the sea was a deep blue colour and the ship was on an even keel and for once there wasn't a thing to worry even a chief engineer. After dinner the old man turned in for his usual half hour rest. Minnie was sound asleep in her basket, curled up under a blanket when he dozed off.

"At four bells, two o'clock, in the afternoon watch, the second mate's watch on deck, the old man woke. He lay for a while, so he told me afterwards, half-asleep and gazing up at the white deck head over his bunk. And then he heard a scream from the bridge and a shout of 'Man overboard!' and he jumped out of his bunk and was out on the lower bridge almost before he'd had time to think. When he got there he found the ship still maintaining her course and speed, and no one making any attempt to swing out a boat or anything, and he yelled to the second mate who was leaning out over the port wing of the bridge: 'Who's gone overboard, mister?' and the second mate said: 'I'm very sorry, sir, but it's Minnie.'

"The old man went off the deep end. He yelled: 'Why the hell didn't you ring the engine-room to *Stop*, you fool!' He raced up the ladder and in two ticks the ship had stopped and a lifeboat had been swung out and was being lowered, with the mate in charge.

You'd have thought there'd been considerable hostility and criticism over that, putting a lifeboat out in mid Atlantic to rescue a monk, but strangely enough no one on board, except the second mate

seemed to think the old man had done anything out of the ordinary She didn't drown The hand who'd velled Man overboard!' had thrown her a lifebuoy The boat reached her took her on board, and brought her back to the *Kolbar*

'The meeting between her and the old man was as effecting as anything I've seen off the films She just cried she was so happy and she pointed to the second mate and jabbered. it's the truth, muster, and we knew all of us, she was accusing him of shoving her overboard which I can't hardly believe was so, even now

Mr Effingham, said the old man, you tried to drown, Minnie

I didn't sir' said the second mate. He nearly cried he was so upset 'She bit me again he said. 'when I wasn't looking But I never touched her'

"'It's my opinion, said the old man when Minnie doesn't like a person, she's got some very good reason for it

'After that there experience Minnie was certainly a better and wiser monk I'll say this for her she was a quick learner she'd learned not to drink ink, she'd learned not to put her hands into stewpans of boiling figs, and she'd learned not to go on the bridge when the second mate was on watch

'She was a good well-behaved little monk for the rest of the voyage and when the ship reached the Thames, the old man said he'd be sorry to say good-bye to her She's a bit of a trial of course, he said but I consider I've done a good deed bringing her into a reasonable state of mind She'll make a nice pet for Miss Merridew Do you know chief he said, 'I'll quite miss having her round It's the truth

'Julia Merridew came on board with her father, Captain Merridew and the old man said how glad he was to see her He said Miss Julia, I've bought you a little gift which I think will please you'

"The girl said 'Why, Captain Myers, how sweet of you!' and the old man blushed like a lovesick boy and said —

'If you'll wait in the saloon one minute I'll bring you my little gift

"No sooner had he gone to fetch Minnie than the second mate came along and he and Julia fell into each other's arms, almost and I thought this is going to be damned hard on the old man I was talking to old Captain Merridew and the firm's superintending engineer when the old man came into the saloon with Minnie

'"There, he said, there Miss Julia is a little present for you with my love

The girl gave one look at the monkey and said —

'Take it away Take it away, quick I believe I'm going to faint.

The old man nearly fainted himself. He said —

"You like monkeys, don't you, Julia?'

I loathe and detest them she said. What on earth made you think that?'

You said I thought and then the old man dried up The second mate had a smug sanctimonious grin on his face and he looked at Julia as much as to say 'Well girl, that's the kind of guy he is I'm not like that am I? I got more sense.'

"After that the tea party wasn't what you might call a howling success. The old man was sad, Julia was haughty and above our heads in the old man's cabin we could hear Minnie screeching curses at the lot of us, and breaking the old man's things

"As soon as Julia and her father had gone, the old man sent for the second mate and said 'Why did you tell me Miss Merridew had said she wanted you to buy her a monkey

I thought she said that sir' he said but I'm not so sure Not now I'm sure I asked her if I might buy her a—a——'

"A what' said the old man, half out of his mind with shock

'A stuffed grey squirrel' said the second mate We saw one in a glass case in a shop, and I thought she might like it She said she'd rather I bought her a live monkey

'You fool! said the old man. Get out'

"He went straight to the steward and said Steward take Minnie to the Zoo Tell them it's a present I don't want her any more

The steward took the monkey in a cardboard box, and left the ship The old man sat in his room and drank whisky Two hours passed He got up and put the bottle away and sank on to the settee broken-hearted I was with him, so I know

At about eight o'clock Minnie came bounding into the room She sprang on to the old man's chest, and he clasped her to him The steward with his face all over claw marks looked through the doorway

'They wouldn't have her he said When I got to Regent's Park they told me to take her away They said They get two hundred exactly like her but not so wild She got out of her box in Piccadilly Circus on the way back and climbed that there statue of Eros I had a bad time getting her back The police wanted to run me in, they took me name anyway

The old man didn't say a word He held out a couple of pound notes to the steward and stroked Minnie's head He was the happiest man in the world and Minnie was the happiest monk

# ENCOURAGING BIDS

THE most difficult moment perhaps for the moderate player is when he has got a hand which is not very strong but is distinctly better than the average, he is then not certain whether to go on bidding or to pass. If he passes he may miss a game, and if he goes on he may incur a penalty. He has no forcing bids, but only encouraging bids to guide him.

Last month I explained the various forcing bids, and gave examples of the strength on which they are based. These forcing bids are made on strong hands, and are simpler to follow than bids which are made on weaker hands. In the case of the weaker hands, which, incidentally, occur much more frequently, there is often a good deal of uncertainty about whether a contract of two, three or four odd tricks can be made on the combined hands. The bidder does not know how far he can go on bidding. It is very important to know exactly how many tricks can be made on both hands, as it may make all the difference between securing and missing a game. The reason why games are missed, as a rule, is because the partners cannot tell how many tricks they can make in the combined hands because they cannot properly interpret each other's bids. They cannot arrive at an accurate contract if each is not telling the other by his bids exactly how many tricks his hand should be worth. In the absence of a forcing bid the moderate player simply makes a guess at what he can do. The more experienced player, on the other hand, is guided by the *degree of encouragement* conveyed by his partner's bid. An encouraging bid is a minimum bid (i.e. not a *jump* bid) which changes the suit, thus North One Heart, South Two Clubs, means that South is not strong enough to give a forcing response by jumping the bidding one step to Three Clubs, but is none the less encouraging a further bid from his partner by his minimum bid because he has changed the suit. In Auction a change from one suit to another was interpreted too often as a denial of the suit first bid. In Contract a change of suit in bidding does not deny but encourages; it is also a sign of greater strength: to name a fresh suit than to support the suit already bid. If North had said Two Hearts over One Heart, this is not so strong as saying Two Clubs, a bid which he can make even when he has support for his partner's Hearts. If he had said One Spade, this is a still stronger response than Two Clubs as it is the one-over-one response which is now generally considered forcing for one round of bidding. When South has bid One Spade he knows that North must speak again, but forcing ends here. It is not carried on to a game bid. When South's suit is not Spades, and when therefore he requires to make a bid of "two" in Clubs or Diamonds to overbid his partner's One Heart, then it is too dangerous to invest the response of 'two' with forcing significance even for one round of bidding, the response now is no longer forcing but encouraging, or "invitational" as it is also termed.

### Examples of Encouraging Bids

Let us consider some examples of different types of encouraging or invitational bids. After an opening bid of One Heart by South let us assume that North holds one of the following three hands —

| Hand I | Hand II |
|---|---|
| Spades A, Q, 7, 4 | Spades 10, 2 |
| Hearts Q, 10, 6 | Hearts Q, 10, 6 |
| Diamonds K, Q, 10, 7, 2 | Diamonds A, Q, 10, 3 |
| Clubs 6, 2 | Clubs J, 9, 6, 5 |

Hand III

Spades 4

Hearts Q, 10, 6, 3, 2

Diamonds K, 2

Clubs A, J, 9, 5

North should on Hand I respond with a bid of One Spade. This is stronger than a support in Hearts. There is also the consideration that North on this 4-4-3 distribution should make a constructive bid to clear the way, preferably for an ultimate contract in No Trumps. His distribution has very poor ruffing values—only a doubleton—and is better suited for play in No Trumps. The bid of One Spade gives South a chance of bidding probably Two Clubs in which case North can bid a game in No Trumps. This changing of the suit during bidding not only encourages further bidding but prepares the way either for a safe No Trump contract or for a contract in a suit in which both partners are strong. This hand is too strong for an immediate support in Hearts.

On Hand II North should bid Two Diamonds. This is more encouraging than a support in Hearts. It is true that in descending to a lower ranking suit—lower

# IN CONTRACT

Hearts to Diamonds here—the degree of encouragement is less than when going up to a higher ranking suit still, the bidder should elect to make this bid because the degree of encouragement conveyed by the bid is greater than that conveyed by a mere raise in Hearts

Hand III is an example of a type of hand where the high-card strength is poor but the distribution very favourable for a game contract in Hearts. The responding bidder who holds this hand can raise One Heart to Four Hearts. In doing so he does not encourage further bidding though it must be observed that encouraging or invitational bids do not always, like forcing bids end with a game call. They sometimes go beyond game calls and invite Slam bids The bid of Four Hearts does not prevent South from making a Slam-invitation bid which North of course declines thus, if South makes the Slam-invitation bid of Five Diamonds, North declines or "signs off" with a bid of Five Hearts

### Discouraging Bids

In order to understand encouraging bids better let us consider some examples of the opposite bids, the discouraging ones

After an opening bid of One Heart by South, let us assume that North holds one of the following hands —

| Hand IV | Hand V |
|---|---|
| Spades Q 7 5 2 | Spades 10 7 |
| Hearts 4 | Hearts J 10 8 |
| Diamonds K 10 7 5 | Diamonds J 10 5 3 2 |
| Clubs 9 8 | Clubs 10 7 |

On Hand IV North can not afford to pass his partner's bid of One Heart, especially when vulnerable He may suffer a severe penalty because the original bid may have been made on four Hearts only and opponents may have no less than eight Hearts between them Although compelled in self defence to take out his partner's bid of One Heart North must do nothing to encourage further bidding on his weak hand How is he, then, to make a bid and yet discourage further bidding? The normal minimum strength for a take-out response is one and a half high-card tricks, but there is one response which guarantees practically nothing This is the One No Trump response It is now generally agreed that a response of One No Trump can be used in any situation where it is necessary either to deny a suit or to give the partner a further opportunity to bid in case he opened with a bid of "one" on a very strong hand On Hand IV North is practically compelled to say "one No Trump," to take out his partner's bid of One Heart. He has a very poor hand with no Ace and no King, yet it might be a useful hand in No Trumps, although worth very little in a contract in Hearts The weak One No Trump response must not be confused with the original bid of One No Trump which is a strong bid, especially when vulnerable The One No Trump response guarantees little or nothing and is a distinctly discouraging bid It is a valuable bid when properly handled

In the case of Hand V North is in a difficulty If he bids Two Diamonds this is, of course an encouraging bid, and his partner will no doubt continue the bidding In this case North has sufficient length to make later a minimum rebid in Diamonds This minimum rebid of a suit is the other generally agreed discouraging signal Before North can make a bid in Diamonds on Hand V he must ask himself "Are my Diamonds long enough and strong enough to rebid as a signing off signal after my partner's next bid?" If he cannot rebid his Diamonds without too great risk he should not bid them in the first place This is the test Hand V is about the weakest hand on which Diamonds can be bid and rebid over Hearts There is, it should be noted a small risk with taking out into a rebiddable suit on a rather weak hand the original bidder may jump the bidding, say to Three Spades, over the bid of Two Diamonds and North will then be committed to a bid of Four Diamonds

COLONEL G. G. J. WALSHE

# PERPLEXITIES

### 1,146.—VISIBILITY POOR.

A UNIFORM though not very dense mist lay over the whole countryside, from my garage door it was just possible to see the nearer end of the church, three hundred yards away. Driving at a moderate speed, I found that I sighted a signpost ahead of me just twenty-five seconds before I passed it. Through the mist there came into view the back of another car which I overtook, without altering my pace, two and a quarter minutes later.

How many miles per hour was it going, provided its speed was also uniform?

### 1,147.—WORD SQUARE.

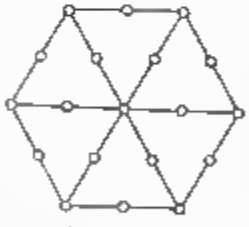
THE blanks in the following verse are to be filled by words which, taken in the order of their occurrence, will make a Word Square:—

My Lord, who ——— Mayfair in the Season
To some ——— anon lets ——— take him.
Bill Grimes, ——— to this, has equal reason
For such a course: but circumstances make him
Remain in town. No ——— ever decks him!
And if it did, the ——— he'd get would vex him.

### 1,148.—LOCATE LOWER LANGLEY.

SLACTON and Hinkbury are two villages seven and a half miles apart. A man starts from Slacton at the same moment as his wife starts from Hinkbury, and both walk straight to a third village, Lower Langley, which they reach at the same time. The man walks twice as fast as his wife. If he had first walked to Hinkbury and then to Lower Langley he would have been twice as long on the way. What is the exact position of Lower Langley?

### 1,149.—CAN YOU FIGURE THIS OUT?



IN the figure shown there are twelve lines, consisting of the six sides of the hexagon and the six halves of the diagonals. You are required to arrange the figures 1 to 19 in the given spaces so that the three numbers along each of the twelve lines add up to 22.

And when you have done this, re-arrange the nineteen figures so that this time the three numbers along the twelve lines add up to 23.

### 1,150.—ODD AND EVEN.

YOU are invited to arrange the nine digits, 1 to 9, in two sets, one containing odd and the other even digits only, so that the two sets have the same sum. The digits may be used to form whole numbers or proper fractions, not necessarily in the lowest terms, but complex or improper fractions are not allowed, nor are recurring decimals.

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles

### 1,141.—WORD SQUARE.

SPIRE, PRIEST, ONION, NOTION, TIDY,
DITTY, CHERUB—BUTCHER, CAREER—TER-
RACE, CRANE—NECTAR, LOWER—TROWEL,
SEQUIN, INQUEST, CLEAN, LANCET, SHAVER
—HARVEST.

### 1,142.—A THREE-SPEED JOURNEY.

FROM the preliminary statement his rates of cycling, walking, and trotting are as 5 : 2 : 3. As the time of each of these modes of progression is the same on the occasion in question, the distances gone are also as 5 : 2 : 3. Therefore he cycles half way, which takes three minutes. So the whole time is nine minutes.

### 1,143.—TONING IT DOWN.

If he buys goods for 100 and sells for 100 + x, by his statement, $x = \frac{15}{100}(100 + x)$

$$85x = 1000$$
$$x = 35.3 \text{ (nearly)}.$$

### 1,144.—FINDING ONE'S MATCH.

BY moving one match as shown, the fraction is made into $\sqrt{\frac{1}{4}}$ and thus equals $\frac{1}{2}$.

### 1,145.—WATCH YOUR STOP.

SOME people don't like tickling.

Policeman when on duty are dignified in manner, controlling the traffic with skill.

Patience and poker are both good card games.

If you have a wife cherish her.

For at least a fortnight before the summer holidays mothers are usually busy.

Annoying the other members of the family is the regular practice of little Tony, though his father has often smacked him.

On the bare possibility of a thunderstorm, some nervous old ladies retire to bed and stay there till the trouble blows over.

A little boy was asked by his nurse, "What did you choose that book to be read out of to-day?"

In fetching the milk the youngster carried it in a bottle.

Of bass singers there is a remarkable one in our choir.

"Who makes faces and busts?" the inspector asked. "The sculptor," answered the pupil, thus winning a credit mark.

Antony said, "Lend me your ears."

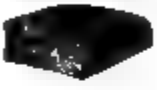
If you have tears, to shed the garment is wasted without first patching the rents.

Charged for a set of false teeth, he refused to pay as he had only had one stopping.

Some hikers cover excessively long distances without a stop, finishing up in a coma.

The Colon end of the Panama Canal is on the Atlantic Ocean; greyhounds are fitted with tape-machines, cock all bars, and every luxury man can devise.

# MINTY CLUB CHAIR



The chair shown below offers luxurious lie-in comfort at moderate cost. Framed in hardwood it takes apart for thorough cleaning and for fitting covers without waste or trouble.
Unit construction of both models shown alongside.
All springs interlaced with woven wire for permanence.

Prices of chair according to length of seat

**From £3-15-0**

SETTEE, £7-7-0.

Suite complete, comprising Settee, 1 medium size and 1 small chair £16-7-0.

The **'Isis'** MINTY CLUB CHAIR ON MODERN LINES

Pampers the human form as never before. The sprung back and doubly sprung seat have patent pocketed featherdown cushions. Pure hair upholstery. Frame, seat and back are separate units.

PRICES according to length of seat
CHAIRS from £5-19-6. SETTEES from £10-10-0.

Write for Catalogue of the Minty "Viceroy" and "Club" Chairs, and patterns of coverings

Minty Ltd.
(Dept. 28),
44/45, HIGH ST.,
OXFORD.

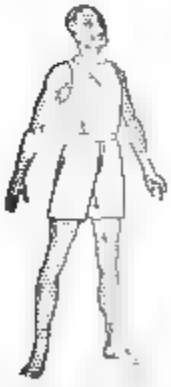
London Showrooms: 123, VICTORIA ST., WESTMINSTER, S.W.1
Manchester Showrooms: 5, Exchange Street.

Pat. No 340741

Visit our Stand at the Ideal Home Exhibition.

LET YOUR BODY BREATHE IN

# AERTEX



**Aertex Athletic Vest and Trunks** on elastic waist.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vest | | |
| 36 | 38 | 40/42 |
| 2/- | 4/- | 6/- |
| Trunks | | |
| 36 | 38 | 40/42 |
| 4/- | 5/- | 6/- |

The active man guards his fitness by wearing Aertex. Thousands of tiny air cells in Aertex allow the body to 'breathe,' and act as a safeguard against chill. Insist on having only genuine Aertex.

SEE THIS LABEL

THE CELLULAR CLOTHING AERTEX LONDON

ON ALL GARMENTS

*If any difficulty in obtaining send your instructions to us when they will be despatched directly through a retailer holding stocks. Catalogue with pleasure.*

**Aertex Polo Sports Shirt**
White and colours
*Sizes 37" to 44"*
From 5/- White, 6/6 colours
Long sleeves 2/- extra
Also made in striped and fancy designs at different prices.

THE CELLULAR CLOTHING CO. LTD., 72,73 FORE ST., LONDON, E.C.2

*Inquiries should be addressed to "MILADY," c/o THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply.*

**A Bargain in Weatherproofs.**

During the forthcoming months a light raincoat will come in very useful, and if you are looking for anything of this kind I should like to draw your attention to what the makers claim to be the world's best value in the way of featherweight stormproofs. This is a well-cut garment identical in appearance with the ordinary high-grade gabardine weatherproof, but only a third of the weight. It is, however, absolutely waterproof and is offered at the amazingly low price of 17s. 6d. for unbelted models, or 19s. 6d. for belted types. Nearly twenty attractive colours are available for your choice, and the coat is particularly handy for rambling or country wear, as it weighs only a little over a pound and can be folded up into a handy roll for the pocket. It is sent out on seven days' approval.

**Spa Treatment at Home.**

I have lately been studying the claims made on behalf of a clever invention which should be of the greatest interest and benefit not only to sufferers from various complaints who have hitherto found it necessary to journey to Continental and other spas in order to "take the waters," but also to those who would like to have similar treatment but are prevented by the cost and lack of time. A little tube—the contents of which never need replacement—imparts to ordinary tap-water the curative properties of medicinal springs, so that one can enjoy the "cure" in one's own home cheaply and quickly. The apparatus is practically everlasting, quite moderate in cost, and provides a large daily supply of "activated" water for drinking and bathing purposes. If you are interested I shall be glad to furnish further particulars.

**English Canned Vegetables.**

Progress is so swift nowadays that many women fail to keep abreast of the labour saving innovations that have been brought about for their benefit in almost every branch of domestic affairs. Do you realize, for instance, what has been happening in connexion with the canning of English vegetables? For to-morrow's little dinner if you wish, you can bring to table your choice from fresh garden peas, new potatoes, stringless beans, spinach, carrots, celery and many other delicious things. These vegetables are *cleansed and cooked ready for use*, merely requiring heating before serving, and you will find their flavour and freshness quite unaffected.

(*Continued on page 32*

**BAILEY'S HYGIENIC TRUSSES**
IMPERVIOUS TO WATER AND PERSPIRATION.

Single 30/-, Double 42/-

**BAILEY'S "BURLINGTON" BELT**

Equally suitable for Male and Female.
**GIVES THE SUPPORT YOU WANT**
*Allows perfect freedom of movement.*
CATALOGUE 35/- and 27/6 FREE
W. H. BAILEY & SON, Ltd. Surgical Instrument Makers,
45, OXFORD STREET LONDON, W.1.



**DOES YOUR PIPE GET STRONG AND RANCID?**

A conscientious if forgetful little lad, convalescing from a prolonged colic, was ordered by the family doctor to take a tablespoonful of cod-liver oil daily. For some days he remembered. Then he forgot. For twelve days he forgot. On the thirteenth, memory and conscience reviving, and hoping to atone for his long lapse, he swallowed that evil tablespoonful of cod-liver oil at one go. And he was very sick to his little tummy. How apt we are to give way to that line of thought—"if ten drops are good, twenty must be twice as good."

Take the case of Milton, for example. Direction No. 157 in that wonderful little booklet which is packed with every bottle reads:

*To Clean Tobacco Pipes.* Take an ordinary unused pipe-cleaner, dip the cotton-covered wire end in Milton, and push it for a moment in a weak solution of Milton (one-sixty-fourth in a tumbler of water). Clean the stem thoroughly with the wet cleaner, working it out well with the solution. Allow the bowl of the pipe to drain out and dry, but leave the stem of each overnight in the solution with the mouth-piece submerged. It will be found that the accumulations are gone, and the pipe now smokes as sweet as a nut.

Could anything be plainer, easier or more simple? It makes good every little. And yet a few days ago one enthusiast visited the Milton works at Islington in search of a kick. "My favourite pipe, an old briar, strong and nasty! Why?" "Did you follow the directions?" he was asked. "You bet I did, and better. One tablespoonful to a tumbler of water, it says. But that sounds weak. So I shoved the pipe into full strength Milton overnight." Naturally his poor pipe was like the little cod-liver oil tummy—overloaded!

Don't overload. The directions are founded on research and long experience. If you do just as the paragraph quoted above directs, you'll find your favourite pipe clean, fresh and "sweet as a nut" every time.

So it goes. 156 different and proved uses in that booklet with every bottle.

And Milton costs but sixpence.



**THIS NEW PEN:-**

**CAN'T LEAK**

"Automatic safety" valve absolutely prevents leakage in any position and also guarantees instant writing.

**SHOWS LEVEL OF INK**

A clean, transparent and incorrodible reservoir takes the place of the usual perishable rubber sac.

Showing the sleeve, the transparent reservoir full of ink and the cap.

**HOLDS 3 TIMES AS MUCH INK**

**GUARANTEE** Try this pen for 30 days. If not completely satisfied send it back to T. B. Ford Ltd., and your money will be refunded in full without quibble. Ford's Pen is fully guaranteed for 10 years.

**30/-** Also in other sizes 25/- and 42/-. And in Gold and Silver.

**MADE IN ENGLAND**

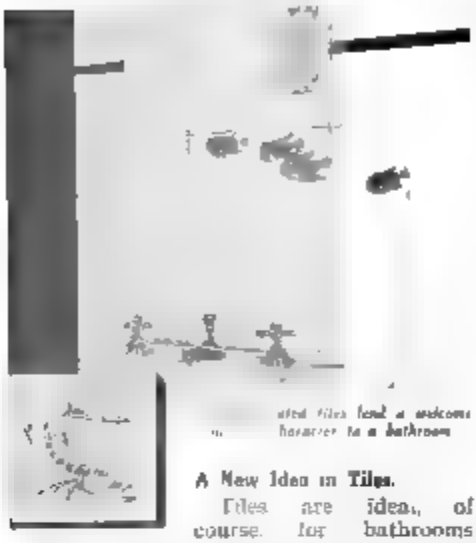
Ford's Pen is obtainable from most stationers, stores and all W. H. Smith & Son's branches, and Boots Stationery Departments. In case of difficulty write to T. B. Ford Ltd., Pen Service Depot, 72, Piccadilly, London, W.1. Telephone Regent 1801 and 1802.

**FORD ALL BRITISH PEN**

MADE BY FORD'S OF GOLD MEDAL BLOTTING FAME.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued*



*...tiled tiles lend a welcome ... character to a bathroom*

**A New Idea in Tiles.**

Tiles are ideal, of course, for bathrooms and similar places, and the modern article glowing with rich colour, has entirely done away with that "operating theatre" look which fastidious people formerly urged as an objection to the austerity of unrelieved white. Now comes yet another innovation, illustrated on this page—hand-decorated tiles for special positions, giving a welcome note of novelty and interest. The picture shows a "splash-back" above a hand-basin, decorated with a lifelike fish design, another fish" tile is seen to the left. These decorated tiles are available in a number of pleasing patterns for bathrooms, fireplaces, etc., and are, by no means expensive.

**Protection Against Damp.**

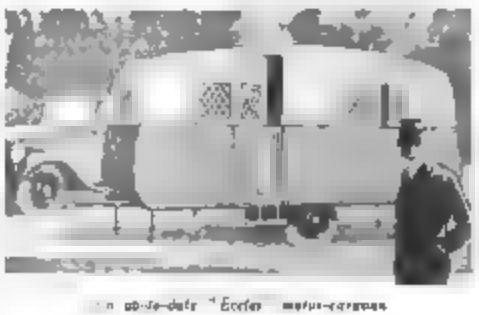
An interesting novelty that will appeal to many people has lately been submitted to me for trial. This is an "air-drier" and takes the form of a neat metal receptacle, about three inches in diameter, containing a quantity of crystals. The function of these crystals is to absorb moisture, and if you wish to protect cupboards, pantries, wardrobes, cocks, pianos, anything and everything you like to think of, from damp, all you have to do is to place one of these little containers inside. The preparation is odourless and absolutely harmless, and can be brought in contact with foodstuffs without any fear of contamination. It will keep your biscuits delightfully crisp and your jam free from mould. After the crystals have absorbed as much moisture as they can hold they turn a pinkish colour. When you see this you heat the container in the oven, or on a hotplate, for about one and a half hours, by which time the crystals will have assumed their original dark blue colour and be ready for service again. This process can be repeated indefinitely. The standard size is suitable for dealing with an area of about ten cubic feet, so that you can make your calculations accordingly. It costs 3s. complete and with a little care will last a lifetime. The uses of this ingenious "air-drier" are innumerable; it will guard anything you wish, from the linen cupboard to your husband's cigars, against the ravages of damp.

**Caravan Holidays.**

The holiday season will be upon us very shortly, and if you want to do something really worth while this year you will do well to put on your thinking-cap *now*. too many folks leave everything until the last moment and then grumble bitterly about the indifferent results achieved. If you are tired of seaside hotels and seaside landladies, why not plan out a caravan holiday and be your own master? All you have to do is to hitch your home-on-wheels to the car—the driving presents no difficulties whatever after ten minutes' preliminary practice—and the whole wide domain of Britain is at your disposal. There is seldom any difficulty about arranging a pull-in wherever you wish to halt, whether it be for a night or a week, and the modern motor-caravan is the cosiest best-thought-out little portable house you can imagine. It can either be bought outright or hired, and I am showing below a picture of one of the latest type, built by a pioneer firm of Birmingham, to give you an idea of their exterior appearance. The interiors must be inspected to be properly appreciated, suffice it to say that they are miracles of compactness and comfort, while the prices, either for purchase or hire, are very moderate.

**Tweeds for Outdoor Wear.**

There is nothing to beat tweed for country costumes, coats or skirts. It wears and hangs "splendidly and always looks just right." But—and it is an important



*...an up-to-date "Eccles" motor-caravan.*

(Continued on page 34.)

For DIGESTIVE DISORDERS — after each meal take a dose of DINNEFORD'S PURE FLUID MAGNESIA

—the antacid and laxative approved by doctors in our grandparents' time, and even more widely used to-day for indigestion, heartburn, acidity, headache, flatulence and bilious affections. This efficacious fluid maintains a high position in modern medicine by its gentle and progressive action, and is undoubtedly the finest form in which to take magnesia.

1/3 & 2/6 per bottle.

BRITISH MADE. BRITISH OWNED.

The "SELVYT" Registered Trade Mark. POLISHING CLOTH and DUSTER

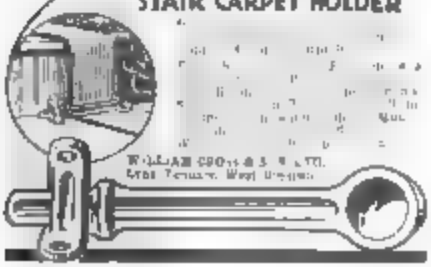
FOR FURNITURE, MOTOR CARS, AEROPLANES, GRAMOPHONE RECORDS, GLASS, JEWELLERY, LEATHERS, ETC.

Will not scratch the most delicate surface.
Picks up dust, does not scatter it.
Good as new when washed.
Sizes 10 inches to 28 inches square.
2 qualities—pile one side and pile both sides.

Stocked by all good shops and stores. In case of difficulty apply "SELVYT," MANCHESTER, ENGLAND.

They look neater

The "LOXIT" STAIR CARPET HOLDER



SPRING RASH & PIMPLES

"Zam-Buk Gave Me a Clear, Healthy Skin."

MISS [illegible] JONES

Zam-Buk cures because of the wonderful herbal oils which penetrate through the pores and reach the roots of the trouble. Also splendid for scalds, chilblains, sore feet, bad legs, piles, poisoned wounds, cuts, burns, etc., 1/3 or 3/- box. All chemists.

ZAM-BUK OINTMENT

VITAL to active Men

The "Litesome" BODY BELT & ATHLETIC SUPPORT

4/6 POST FREE

FRED HURTLEY LTD Victoria Mills Victoria Park KEIGHLEY

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

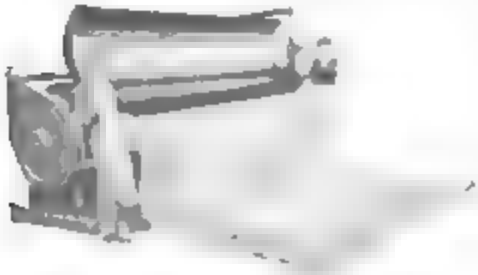
but" it must be really good tweed, made of pure new wool giving that unmistakable appearance of quality. There is a firm in Northumberland which has specialised in the manufacture of tweeds of this type for over a century, and I strongly advise you to see their products before ordering your new costume. They have just added something like forty new patterns to their already extensive range—patterns rich in lovely colourings yet in perfect taste and at quite moderate prices considering their superlative merit. The full collection—over eighty, I believe—will be sent free for inspection, and if you choose one you will have something that will rouse the envy and admiration of all your friends.

### Rejuvenating Carpets.

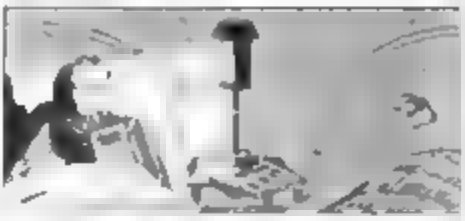
When one reads about carpets being dry cleaned one does not usually stop to think what this entails, or what kind of machine is capable of handling a big, heavy carpet and extracting the dirt from it. The interesting picture reproduced below, taken in the works of a well-known firm of cleaners, shows a carpet emerging from a press or cylinder after treatment. As a matter of fact, with this particular firm the cleaning is only half the battle; they also "re-finish" the fabric, renewing its "life" and not only enhancing the appearance, but often adding years of useful wear. If you have a good old carpet that has apparently seen its best days, you should get an estimate for its rejuvenation; you will be astonished at the moderate prices charged and the excellence of the results. These people are equally good for eiderdowns, bedspreads, curtains, and clothes.

### A Novel Bedroom Lamp.

The little sketches reproduced above illustrate a novel electric lamp which most satisfactorily solves a problem that is always cropping up in bedrooms, sick-rooms, and nurseries. A touch on the shutter lights any area required, leaving the rest of the room in darkness. The opening in the screen is readily adjustable, and the lamp has a special tinted glass to avoid glare, a semi-transparent shade, and a cowl that directs the rays downwards. As regards finish, this is a very handsome article, with the shutter screen, cowl and base enamelled in colour; the shaft and knob are chromium plated. Complete with lamp-holder and 6ft. of flex, this most practical bedroom lamp costs 35s.



*carpet emerging from a cleaning cylinder after renovation*



*The new style reading lamp, shut off from the rest*

*The same lamp lighting both beds*

### Study Your Complexion.

A complexion treatment that is attracting much attention is based on the old "mud pack" idea, but takes only a few minutes daily and substitutes a dainty cream for the unpleasant mud. The manufacturers claim that their method clears and rejuvenates the skin, removing blemishes and restoring the bloom and texture of youth. The cream is sold in jars at 2s. 9d. and 4s. 9d., giving respectively three and eight weeks' supply. Women who are conscious that their complexion is not quite what it might be should certainly investigate this novel process.

### Dainty Rubber Soles.

If you want to save money on shoe repairs, and at the same time walk with added comfort and security, take a leaf out of the men's book and get your footwear soled with special light-weight "stuck-on" rubber soles. They are as thin as wafers and quite invisible, but last for ages, meanwhile making walking quite a luxury. These really dainty soles, and rubber-heels, made by the same firm, make an excellent equipment for the summer, and you will be agreeably astonished to note how long your shoes wear without further attention.

*(Continued on page 36.)*

# Phillips Yeast IS LIVE Yeast

***Pure Live Yeast has long been known to Doctors as Nature's most effective remedy for many complaints . . . . . .***

### *ITS ACTION ON THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM . . . . . .*

The primary action of PHILLIPS Live Yeast is to *regulate the whole process of digestion*. Taken as it should be, at the beginning of a meal, it suppresses nausea heartburn and discomfort, and immediately stimulates the appetite. *It is an invaluable remedy for all who suffer from indigestion in any form*, frequently it gives immediate relief in stomach troubles that have persisted for years.

### *ITS WONDERFUL TONIC EFFECTS*

The regulation of digestion goes far to explain the powerful tonic influence of PHILLIPS Live Yeast. Perfect assimulation follows perfect digestion all the nutrient elements of food pass into the blood, and the Yeast vitamins which control assimilation build them up into *rich blood and sound nerve tissue*. PHILLIPS Live Yeast *banishes Depression* and subdues nervous excitement and irritability. It contains no drug, and is *absolutely harmless*.

### *ITS ACTION ON THE BLOOD*

The scientific explanation of the wonderful efficacy of PHILLIPS Yeast in this respect is that the Yeast nuclein activates the white corpuscles—the natural protective agencies of the body—*to destroy disease germs and to eliminate impurities from the blood*. PHILLIPS Live Yeast speedily disperses *Boils and Abscesses* and reduces uric acid, the cause of *Rheumatism, Gout* and *Lumbago*; it clears up Acne and Skin blemishes, leaving the skin *surface fresh and healthy*.

*A Physician writes 13th Feb. 1933:*

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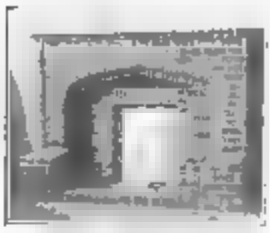
## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

### Restful Brick Fireplaces.

There is something very satisfying and homely about a tastefully designed red-brick fireplace; it actually improves with age, and one never gets tired of it as one does of more showy affairs. I am illustrating here a very handsome type, complete with sunk hearth fire. There are scores of designs to choose from, most of them surprisingly moderate in price, and suitable for rooms of any style or period. If you are dissatisfied with your present fireplace you should certainly investigate the manifold possibilities of brick. With fires no longer in daily demand, this is a very good time of year to put alterations in hand.



*A pleasing fireplace in red brick.*

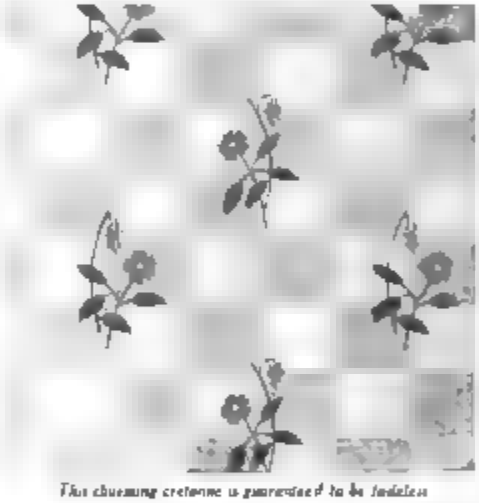
### Sunshine in the Home.

Most people nowadays are well aware of the health-giving properties of sunshine—hence the enormous popularity of sunbathing. Unfortunately, owing to the fickleness of our climate, it is well-nigh impossible to get sufficient of these beneficent rays out of doors, but a bountiful supply of sunlight is now obtainable in every household through the medium of a "sunshine" lamp. This remarkable invention emits light, heat, and mild ultra-violet rays which are almost identical with those of the solar spectrum and is *absolutely safe* for anyone. You treat it, in fact, just as you would the midsummer sun. Goggles are quite unnecessary if bright light worries you, just wear ordinary tinted glasses. These sunshine lamps work off the ordinary electric circuit, and are very economical. They have been adopted not only in private houses but by hospitals, sanatoria, and clinics all over the world, and one could write chapters about the benefits the rays confer in treating numerous ailments and as a general tonic. The lamps are not expensive, and are obtainable in table, floor and ceiling models. I shall be glad to put you in touch with the makers.

*A "sunshine" lamp in the nursery.*

### Fabrics that Won't Fade.

One would set about the renewal of curtains and hangings with much greater zest if one could only discover fabrics that were *really* fadeless—and not too expensive! So many materials disappoint in this way that the housewife becomes discouraged. If this is your own position, let me tell you of a firm which specializes in fabrics *guaranteed* to be non-fading, and cheerfully replaces anything that fails in this respect. The choice is endless—velours, chenilles, damasks, art silks, casement cloths, etc., etc. Books of lovely patterns, and also a gorgeous catalogue in full colour, will be sent free on request, and prices are very moderate. Some of the fabrics featured will come as distinct revelations to many people.



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## HINTS FOR PARENTS AND LOVERS OF CHILDREN

One of the greatest worries of many a mother's life is the fact that her child does not appear to be eating sufficient food for its needs. Almost every mother indeed complains of this at some period or other.

It is obvious to an unbiassed observer, however, that hosts of kiddies who seem to their anxious parents to be defaulters in this respect nevertheless look perfectly fit and sturdy. On the other hand, children who are "always eating" often give one the impression of being underfed.

The explanation seems to be that some youngsters derive more nourishment from their food than others. For this reason it is difficult to lay down hard-and-fast rules as to the amount of food a child should eat. If he is growing normally and keeping fit and well there cannot be much wrong.

The kiddy who suddenly "goes off" his food, however, presents a different problem. Leaving aside cases of loss of appetite due to definite disease (which must, of course, have medical attention), there are several common causes which can be easily recognized, and here the application of a few common-sense principles is of great assistance.

Take the child whose lack of appetite is due to some error of diet. Everyone knows the youngster who "picks" at his food, and refuses to continue a meal after the first few mouthfuls. He is often quite well-nourished, but appears out-of-sorts, and is fretful and irritable. Careful examination of his dietary will generally show that there is something amiss.

In many such cases the trouble is due to the fact that the kiddies have been consistently overfed, the loss of appetite is due to "tiredness" on the part of the digestive processes. The obvious treatment is to allow their stomachs a chance to recover normal balance. Such youngsters should not be pressed to eat, but should rather for a time, be encouraged to abstain. Give concentrated foods temporarily, and cut down the daily allowance of milk to not more than a pint.

Then there is the child whose poor appetite is the result of habitual irregularity—hurried meals at all hours, supplemented by "pickings" from the elders' table, with biscuits and sweets between whiles. The correction of this type of dietary error is also obvious, and is generally followed by a gradual return of healthy appetite.

Another common picture is the youngster who has been given the wrong kind of food—usually a sloppy diet, with an excess of sugar. Bowls of milk-puddings, gravy and mashed potatoes, followed perhaps by a milk pudding. After a period of this sort of feeding the child's appetite almost inevitably declines.

The following measures will be found of service in dealing with children suffering from general loss of appetite, especially the types mentioned above.

It is a well-known fact that our emotions exercise a marked effect on our appetite. For this reason great care should be taken to ensure that the child gets his meals in a calm, unhurried atmosphere. A late breakfast gulped down by a youngster worried by the prospect of punishment for being late for school is a mistake that should never happen. Strictly regular meal-hours must be observed, and no food given between times. The bowels should be carefully regulated, and plenty of opportunity allowed for exercise in the open air.

As regards the diet, sloppy foods, such as bread soaked in milk, mashed potatoes and gravy, etc., must be avoided. Milk and milk puddings should be limited, and baked apples, stewed fruits, steamed puddings, etc., substituted as sweets. The diet should contain a fair proportion of meat, fish, fat bacon, beans, peas, lentils, green vegetables, eggs and brown bread.

Anxious parents are apt, when children [illegible] those containing iron, but these are really unsuitable for kiddies with precarious appetites. Cod-liver oil, while invaluable in cases of debilitation, is very liable to upset the stomach in cases of temporary loss of appetite. The best form of medicine is a bitter stomach tonic, such as soda-mint.

Lastly, we have to consider the child whose loss of appetite has a nervous or neurotic basis. In many such cases refusal to eat is a form of naughtiness, used by the youngster as a means of drawing attention to himself. Fond parents or nurses often waste an enormous amount of time and patience in coaxing him, and punishment proves equally futile.

This particular trouble is not easily remedied. The parent or nurse must stop taking notice of the child's tantrums, treating the matter as of no consequence. If this *régime* is rigidly carried out the neurotic child will often regain his appetite in a remarkably short time! Some parents, however, find it impossible to conceal [illegible] ty, and in such cases it is sometimes necessary to send the child away from home, in charge of someone who will adopt sterner measures.

JUN 2 1933

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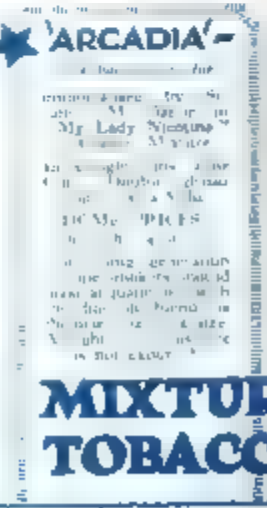


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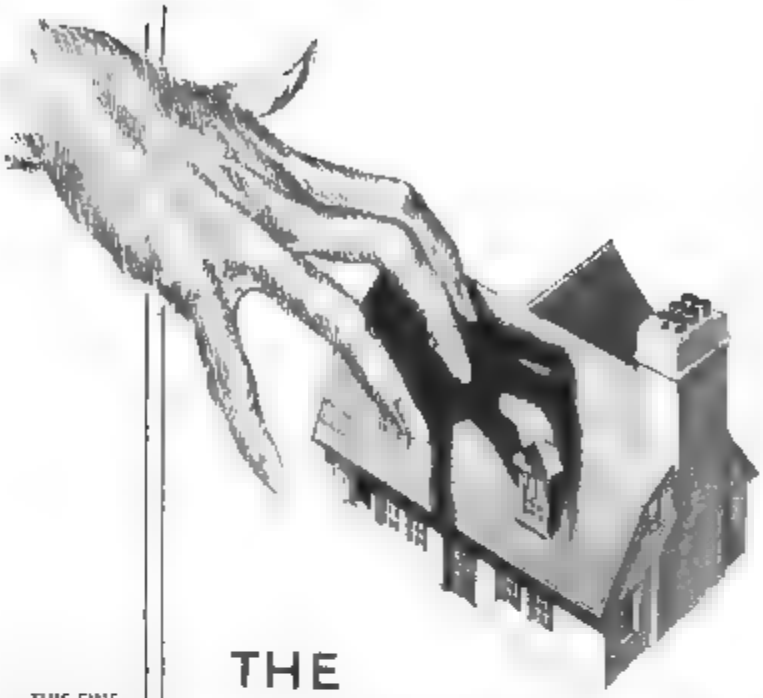

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Vandyk.

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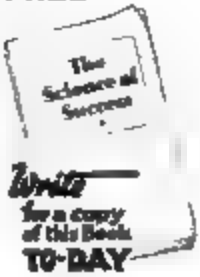


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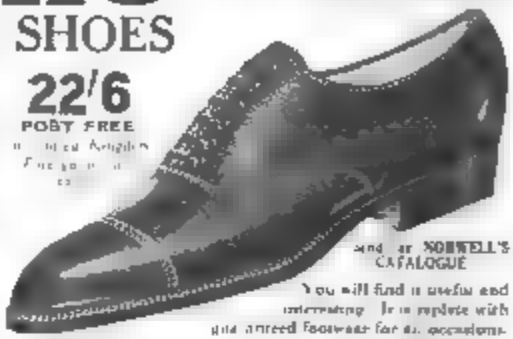

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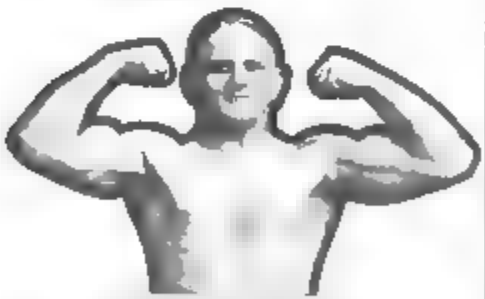

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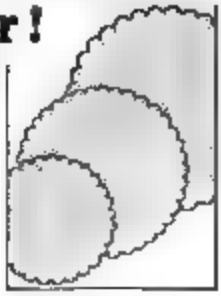

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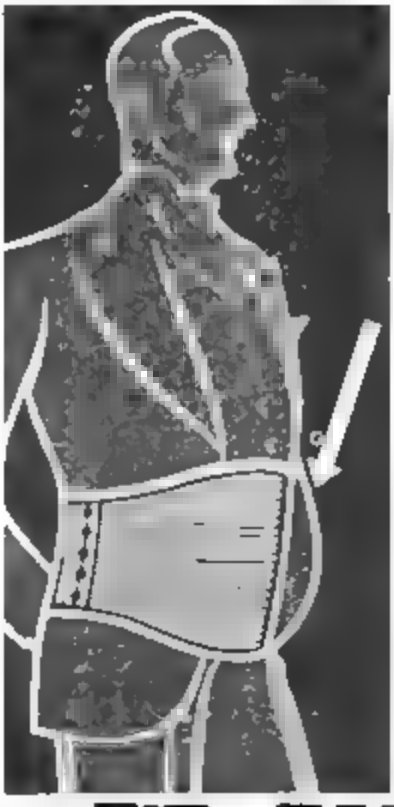

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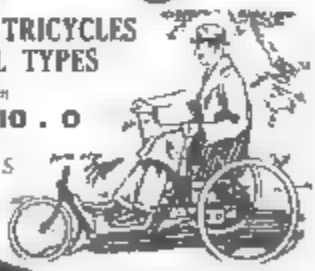

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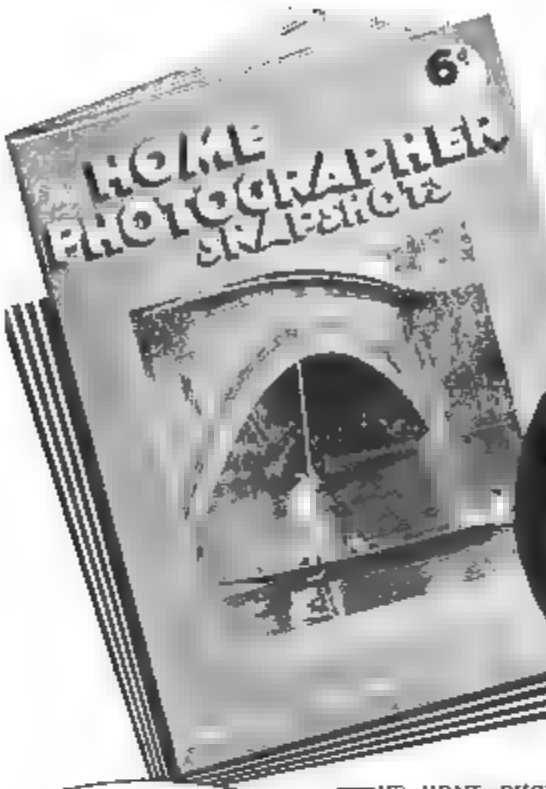


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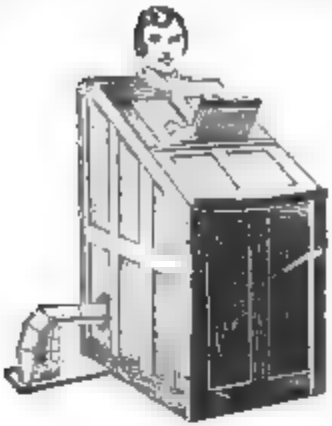

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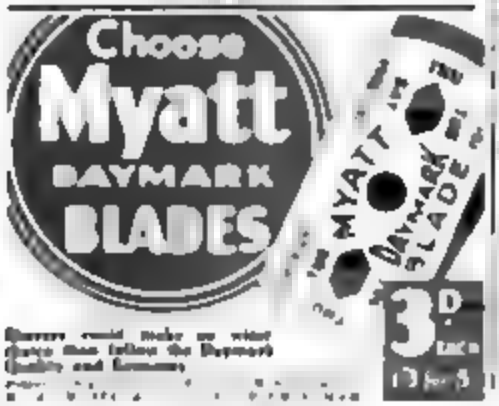


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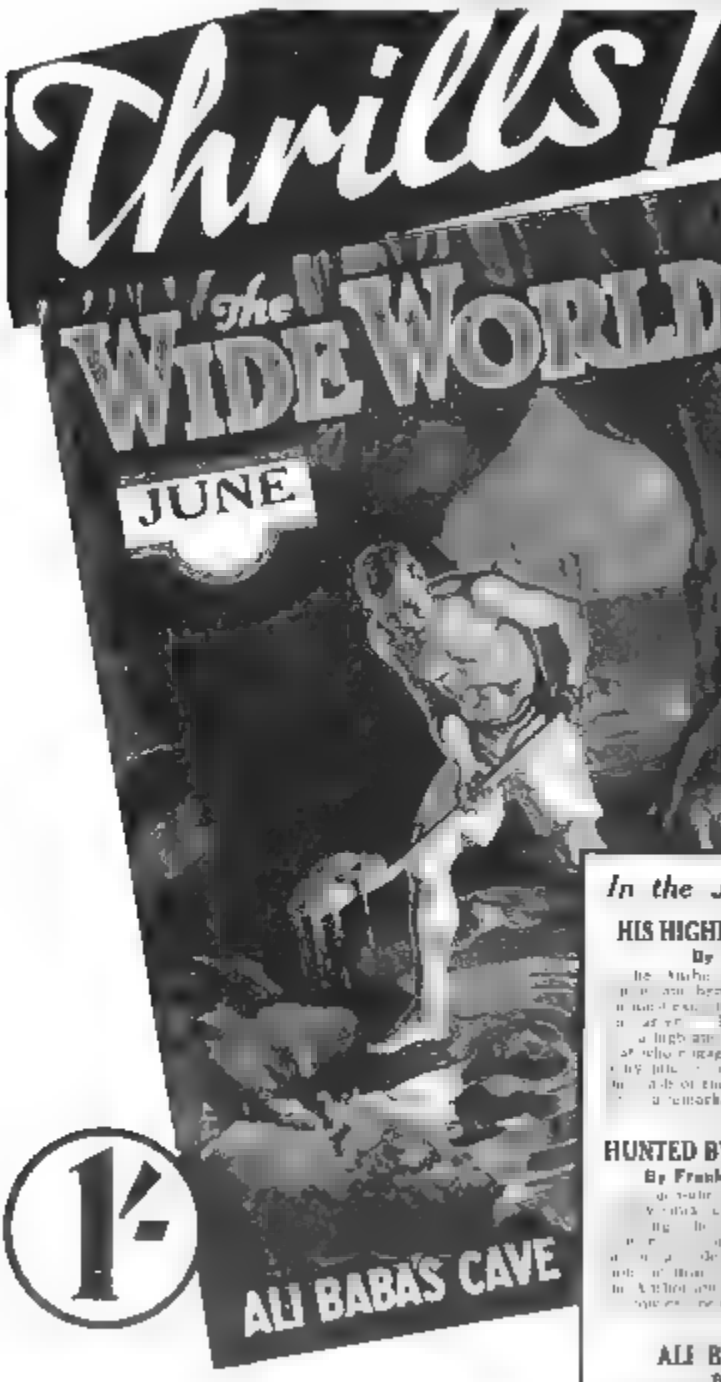


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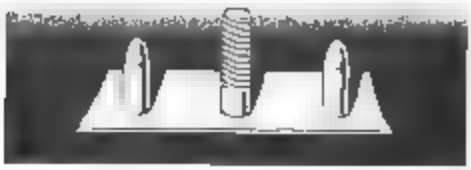

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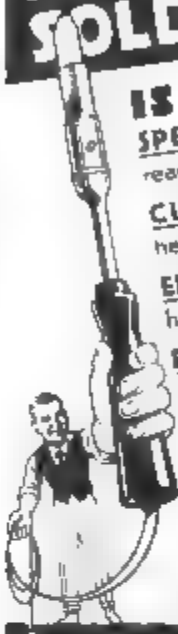

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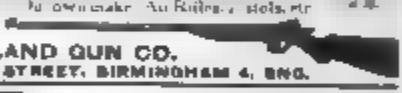

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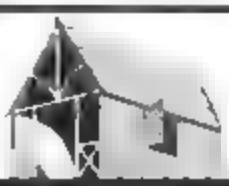

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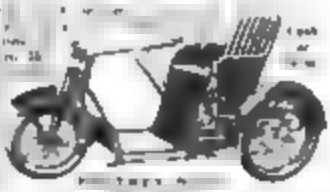

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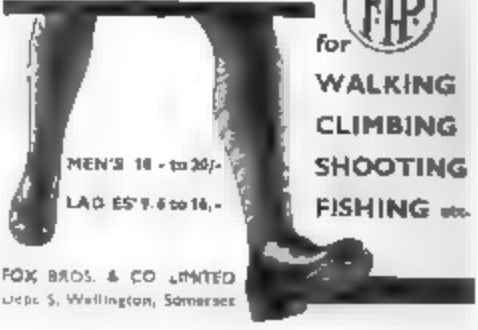


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# THE STRAND MAGAZINE

## Contents for June, 1933

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Frontispiece Bulstrode uttered a stunned cry. "You!" He stared at her speechless, but in Mabelle Ridgway's eyes there shone a soft and friendly light


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| THE CASTAWAYS<br>Illustrations by Gilbert Wilkinson. | P. G. WODEHOUSE | 563 |
| ATALANTA<br>Illustrations by Seabright. | WARWICK DEEPING | 575 |
| SOMERSET MAUGHAM The Man and His Method<br>Illustrations from Photographs and Paintings | GODFREY WINN | 584 |
| JANE OF THE ROUGH TONGUE<br>Illustrations by Frank Oldham. | J. HASTINGS TURNER | 592 |
| THE FLAG AND THE FLAPPER<br>Illustrations by Illingworth | LYNN DOYLE | 602 |
| ACROSTICS | | 611 |
| MR. GEEN LOSES HIS WATCH<br>Illustrations by John Finlay. | STORM JAMESON | 612 |
| ENGLAND THE INEXHAUSTIBLE<br>Illustrations from Special Photographs by J. Dixon-Scott | E. V. LUCAS, C.H. | 623 |
| FEET OF CLAY<br>Illustrations by Balliol Salmon | B. L. JACOT | 634 |
| THE ART OF ILLUSION Some Secrets of the Film Studios<br>Illustrations from Photographs. | W. HOLT WHITE | 644 |
| DOUBLE DEALING<br>Illustrations by B. J. Dawson | H. DE VERE STACPOOLE | 651 |
| PRESENCE OF MIND<br>Illustration by Keith Bryant | GEORGE CREEL | 660 |
| AMONG THIEVES<br>Illustrations by Leo Bates | W. TOWNEND | 663 |
| PERPLEXITIES | | 672 |


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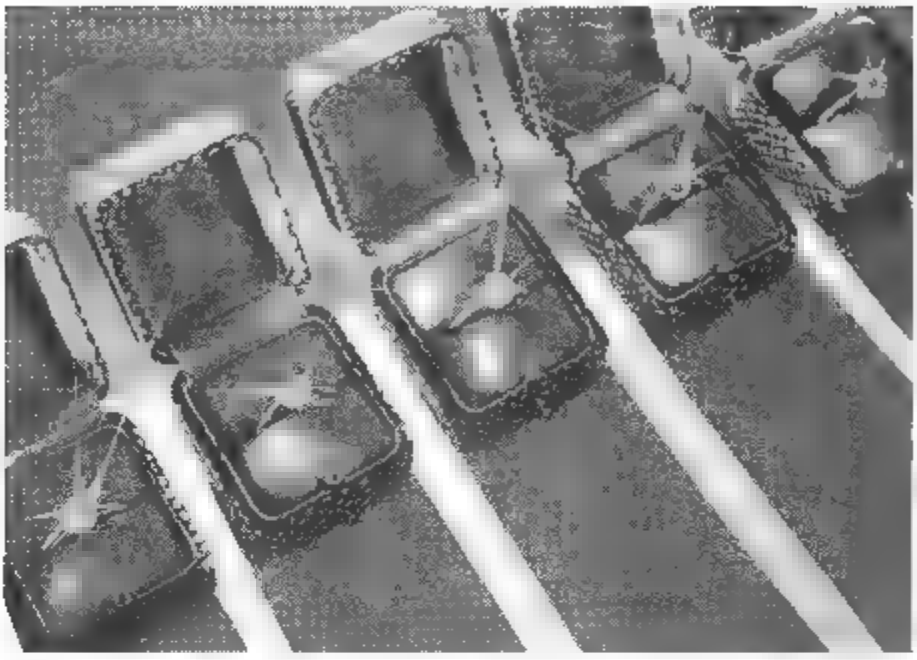

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*June,*
1933

*Bulstrode uttered a stunned cry.*
*"You!"*
*He stared at her speechless, but in Mabelle Ridgway's eyes there shone a soft and friendly light*

# THE CASTAWAYS

## by P. G. WODEHOUSE

[illegible]

MONDAY night in the bar-parlour of the Angler's Rest is usually Book Night. This is due to the fact that on Sunday afternoon it is the practice of Miss Postlethwaite, our literature loving barmaid to retire to her room with a box of caramels and a novel from the circulating library and, having removed her shoes to lie down on the bed and indulge in what she calls a good old read. On the following evening she places the results of her researches before us and invites our judgment.

This week-end it was one of those Desert Island stories which had claimed her attention.

"It's where this ship is sailing the Pacific Ocean, explained Miss Postlethwaite, 'and it strikes a reef, and the only survivors are Cyril Treveryan and Eunice Westleigh and they float ashore on a plank to this uninhabited island. And gradually they find the solitude, and what I might call the loneliness drawing them strangely together and in Chapter Nineteen, which is as far as I've got they've just fallen into each other's arms and all around was the murmur of the surf and the cry of wheeling sea birds. And why I don't see how it's all going to come out," said Miss Postlethwaite. "It is because they don't like each other really and what's more, Eunice is engaged to be married to a prominent banker in New York and Cyril to the daughter of the Duke of Rotherhithe. Looks like a mix-up to me."

A Sherry and Bitters shook his head.

"Far-fetched," he said disapprovingly. Not the sort of thing that ever really happens.'

'On the contrary," said Mr Mulliner. 'It is an almost exact parallel to the case of Genevieve Bootle and my brother Joseph's younger son, Bulstrode."

'Were they cast ashore on a desert island?"

"Practically," said Mr Mulliner. 'They were in Hollywood, writing dialogue for the talking pictures."

Miss Postlethwaite, who prides herself on her encyclopædic knowledge of English Literature, bent her shapely eyebrows.

'Bulstrode Mulliner? Genevieve Bootle?" she murmured. "I never read anything by them. What did they write?'

My nephew' Mr Mulliner hastened to explain, "was not an author. Nor was Miss Bootle. Very few of those employed in writing motion-picture dialogue are. The executives of the studios just haul in anyone they meet and make them sign contracts. Most of the mysterious disappearances you read about are due to this cause. Only the other day they found a plumber who had been missing for years. All the time he had been writing dialogue for the Mishkin Brothers. Once having reached Los Angeles, nobody is safe."

'Rather like the old Press Gang' said the Sherry and Bitters.

'Just like the old Press Gang,' said Mr Mulliner.



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# The Castaways

My nephew Bulstrode (said Mr Mulliner), as is the case with so many English younger sons had left his native land to seek his fortune abroad and at the time when this story begins was living in New York, where he had recently become betrothed to a charming girl of the name of Mabelle Ridgway.

Although naturally eager to get married the young couple were prudent. They agreed that before taking so serious a step they ought to have a little capital put by. And, after talking it over, they decided that the best plan would be for Bulstrode to go to California and try to strike Oil.

So Bulstrode set out for Los Angeles, all eagerness and enthusiasm and the first thing that happened to him was that somebody took his new hat, a parting gift from Mabelle, leaving in its place in the club car of the train a Fedora that was a size too small for him.

The train was running into the station when he discovered his loss, and he hurried out to scan his fellow-passengers, and presently there emerged a stout man with a face rather like that of a vulture which has been doing itself well on the corpses. On this person's head was the missing hat.

And, just as Bulstrode was about to accost him a troupe of lightly-clad dancing girls surrounded this stout man strewing roses, and then there came up a mob of camera-men, who photographed him in various attitudes, and before Bulstrode could get a word in he was bowling off in a canary-coloured automobile bearing on its door in crimson letters the legend, "Jacob Z. Schnellenhamer, President, Perfecto-Zizzbaum Motion Picture Corp."

All the Mulliners are men of spirit, and Bulstrode did not propose to have his hats sneaked, even by the highest in the land, without lodging a protest. Next morning he called at the offices of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum, and after waiting four hours was admitted to the presence of Mr Schnellenhamer.

The motion-picture magnate took a quick look at Bulstrode and thrust a paper and a jewelled fountain-pen towards him.

"Sign here," he said.

A receipt for the hat, no doubt, thought Bulstrode. He scribbled his name at the bottom of the document and Mr Schnellenhamer pressed an onyx bell.

"Miss Stern," he said, addressing his secretary, "what vacant offices have we on the lot?"

"There is Room 40 in the Leper Colony."

"I thought there was a song-writer there."

"He passed away Tuesday."

"Has the body been removed?"

Yes, sir.

Then Mr. Mullner will occupy the room, starting from to-day. He has just signed a contract to write dialogue for us.

Bulstrode would have spoken, but Mr. Schnellenhamer silenced him with a gesture.

What are we working on "Scented Sinners" now?" he asked.

The secretary consulted a list.

Mr. Loakes, Mr. Noakes, Miss Fayersham, Miss Wilson, Mr. Featheringay, Mr. Mendelsohn, Mr. Markey, Mrs. Cooper, Mr. Lennox and Mr. Dabney.

What about?

There was a missionary who came in [illegible] wanting to convert the extra girls. He started a treatment, but he has escaped to Canada."

*Bulstrode turned and perceived in the doorway Mabelle Ridgway, his betrothed. With her was a dark young man with oiled hair and a saturnine expression.*

"Tchah!" said Mr. Schnellenhamer, annoyed. "We must have more vigilance, more vigilance. Give Mr. Mullner a script of 'Scented Sinners' before he goes."

The secretary left the room. He turned to Bulstrode.

"Did you ever see 'Scented Sinners'?"

Bulstrode said he had not.

"Powerful drama of life as it is lived by the jazz-crazed, gin-crazed Younger Generation whose hollow laughter is but the mask for an aching heart," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "It ran for a week in New York and lost a hundred thousand

dollars, so we bought it. It has the mucus of a good story. See what you can do with it."

"But I don't want to write for the pictures," said Bulstrode.

"You've got to write for the pictures," said Mr. Schnellenhamer. "You've signed the contract."

"I want my hat."

"In the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Motion Picture Corporation," said Mr. Schnellenhamer coldly, "our slogan is Co-operation not Hats."

THE Leper Colony to which Bulstrode had been assigned proved to be a long, low building with small cells opening on a narrow corridor. It had been erected to take care of the overflow of the studio's writers, the majority of whom were located in what was known as the Ohio State Penitentiary. Bulstrode took possession of Room 40, and settled down to see what he could do with "Scented Sinners."

He was not unhappy. A good deal has been written about the hardships of life in motion-picture studios, but most of it, I am glad to say, is greatly exaggerated. The truth is that there is little or no actual ill treatment of the writing staff, and the only thing that irked Bulstrode was the loneliness of the life.

Few who have not experienced it can realize the eerie solitude of a motion-picture studio. Human intercourse is virtually unknown. You are surrounded by writers, each in his or her little hutch, but if you attempt to establish communication with them you will find on every door a card with the words "Working. Do not Disturb," and if you push open one of these doors you are greeted by a snarl so animal, so menacing, that you retire hastily lest nameless violence befall.

The world seems very far away. Outside, the sun beats down on the concrete, and occasionally you will see a man in shirt sleeves driving a lorry to a distant set, while ever and anon the stillness is broken by the shrill cry of some wheezing supervisor. But for the most part a forlorn silence prevails.

The conditions, in short, are almost precisely those of such a desert island as Miss Postlethwaite was describing to us just now.

In these circumstances the sudden arrival of a companion, especially a companion of the opposite sex, can scarcely fail to have its effect on a gregarious young man. Entering his office one morning and finding a girl in it, Bulstrode Mulliner experienced much the same emotions as did Robinson Crusoe on meeting Friday. It is not too much to say that he was electrified.

She was not a beautiful girl. Tall, freckled, and slab-featured, she had a distinct look of a halibut. To Bulstrode, however, she seemed a vision.

"My name is Bootle," she said. "Genevieve Bootle."

"Mine is Mulliner. Bulstrode Mulliner. They told me to come here."

"To see me about something?"

"To work with you on a thing called 'Scented Sinners.' I've just signed a contract to write dialogue for the company."

"Can you write dialogue?" asked Bulstrode. A foolish question, for, if she could, the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation would scarcely have engaged her.

"No," said the girl despondently. "Except for letters to Ed, I've never written anything."

"Ed?"

"Mr. Murgatroyd, what I mean. I'm engaged to him. He's a bootlegger in Chicago, and I came out here to try to work up his West Coast connexion. And I went to see Mr. Schnellenhamer to ask if he would like a few cases of guaranteed pre-War Scotch, and I'd hardly begun to speak when he said 'Sign here.' So I signed, and now I find I can't leave till this 'Scented Sinners' thing is finished."

"I am in exactly the same position," said Bulstrode. "We must buckle to and make a quick job of it. You won't mind if I hold your hand from time to time? I fancy it will assist composition."

"But what would Ed say?"

"Ed won't know."

"No, there's that," agreed the girl.

"And when I tell you that I myself am engaged to a lovely girl in New York," Bulstrode pointed out, "you will readily understand that what I am suggesting is merely a purely mechanical device for obtaining the best results on this script of ours."

"Well, of course, if you put it like that—"

"I put it just like that," said Bulstrode, taking her hand in his and patting it.

Against hand-holding as a means of stimulating the creative faculties of the brain there is, of course, nothing to be said. All collaborators do it. The trouble is that it is too often but a first step to other things. Gradually, little by little, as the long days wore on and propinquity and solitude began to exercise their spell, Bulstrode could not disguise it from himself that he was becoming oddly drawn to this girl, Bootle. If she and he had been fishing for turtles on the same

*A powerful hand fell on Bulstrode's shoulder A powerful foot struck him in the trousers-seat, and he flew through the open door of the office*

mid-Pacific isle, they could not have been in closer communion, and presently the realization smote him like a blow that he loved her—and fervently, at that. For twopence, he told himself, had he not been a Mulliner and a gentleman, he could have crushed her in his arms and covered her face with burning kisses.

And, what was more, he could see by subtle signs that his love was returned. A quick glance from eyes that swiftly fell—the timid offer of a banana—a tremor in her voice as she asked if she might borrow his pencil-sharpener. These were little things, but they spoke volumes. If Genevieve Bootle was not crazy about him, he would eat his hat—or rather Mr. Schnellenhamer's hat.

He was appalled and horrified. All the Mulliners are the soul of honour, and as he thought of Mabelle Ridgway waiting for him and trusting him in New York, Bulstrode burned with shame and remorse. In the hope of averting the catastrophe he plunged with a fresh fury of energy into the picturization of "Scented Sinners."

It was a fatal move. It simply meant that Genevieve Bootle had to work harder on the thing, too, and 'Scented Sinners' was not the sort of production on which a frail girl could concentrate in warm weather without something cracking. Came a day with the thermometer in the nineties when, as he turned to refer to a point in Mr. Noakes's treatment, Bulstrode heard a sudden sharp snort at his side and, looking up, saw that Genevieve had begun to pace the room with feverish steps, her fingers entwined in her hair. And, as he stared at her in deep concern, she flung herself in a chair with a choking sob and buried her face in her hands.

And seeing her weeping there, Bulstrode could restrain himself no longer. Something snapped in him. It was his collar-stud. His neck, normally a fifteen and an eighth, had suddenly swelled under the pressure of uncontrollable emotion into a large seventeen. For an instant he stood gurgling wordlessly, like a bull-pup choking over a chicken-bone, then darting forward, he clasped her in his arms and began to murmur all those words of love which until now he had kept pent up in his heart.

He spoke well and eloquently and at considerable length, but not at such length as he had planned. For, at the end of perhaps two minutes and a quarter there rent the air in his immediate rear a sharp exclamation or cry, and, turning, he perceived in the doorway Mabelle Ridgway, his betrothed. With her was a dark young man with oiled hair and a saturnine expression, who looked like the sort of fellow the police are always spreading a drag-net for in connexion with the recent robbery of Schoenstein's Bon Ton Delicatessen Store in Eighth Avenue.

THERE was a pause. It is never easy to know just what to say on these occasions, and Bulstrode, besides being embarrassed, was completely bewildered. He had supposed Mabelle three thousand miles away.

'Oh—hullo,' he said, untwining himself from Genevieve Bootle.

The dark young man was reaching in his hip-pocket, but Mabelle stopped him with a gesture.

'I can manage, thank you, Mr. Murgatroyd. There is no need for sawn-off shot guns.'

The young man had produced his weapon and was looking at it wistfully.

"I think you're wrong, lady," he demurred. "Do you know who that is that this necker is necking?" he asked, pointing an accusing finger at Genevieve Bootle, who was cowering against the ink-pot. "My girl. No less. In person. Not a picture."

Mabelle gasped.

"You don't say so!"

"I do say so."

"Well, it's a small world," said Mabelle. "Yes, sir, a small world, and you can't say it isn't. All the same, I think we had better not have any shooting. This is not Chicago. It might cause comment and remark."

'Maybe you're right," agreed Ed Murgatroyd. He blew on his gun, polished it moodily with the sleeve of his coat and restored it to his pocket. "But I'll give her a piece of my mind," he said, glowering at Genevieve, who had now retreated to the wall and was holding before her, as if in a piteous effort to shield herself from vengeance, an official communication from the Front Office notifying all writers that the expression "Polack mug" must no longer be used in dialogue.

"And I will give Mr. Mulliner a piece of my mind," said Mabelle. 'You stay here and chat with Miss Bootle while I interview the Great Lover in the passage.'

Out in the corridor Mabelle faced Bulstrode, tight-lipped. For a moment there was silence, broken only by the clicking of typewriters from the various hutches and the occasional despairing wail of a writer stuck for an adjective.

'Well, this is a surprise!" said Bulstrode with a sickly smile. "How on earth do you come to be here, darling?"

'Miss Ridgway to you!" retorted Mabelle, with flashing eyes. "I will tell

you I should have been in New York still if you had written, as you said you would But all I've had since you left is one measly picture-postcard of the Grand Canyon."

Bulstrode was stunned

"You mean I've only written to you once?"

Just once And after waiting for three weeks, I decided to come here and see what was the matter On the train I met Mr Murgatroyd We got into conversation, and I learned that he was in the same position as myself His *fiancée* had disappeared into the No Man's Land of Hollywood, and she hadn't written at all It was his idea that we should draw the studios In the past two days we have visited seven, and to-day, flushing the Perfecto-Zizzbaum, we saw you coming out of a building . . ."

"The commissary I had been having a small frosted malted milk. I felt sort of faint"

"You will feel sort of fainter" said Mabelle her voice as frosted as any malted milk in California. by the time I've done with you So this is the kind of man you are, Bulstrode Mulliner! A traitor and a libertine!"

From inside the office came the sound of a girl's hysterics, blending with the deeper note of an upbraiding bootlegger and the rhythmic tapping on the wall of Mr Dabney and Mr Mendelsohn who were trying to concentrate on "Scented Sinners." A lifetime in Chicago had given Mr Murgatroyd the power of expressing his thoughts in terse, nervous English and some of the words he was using even when filtered through the door, were almost equivalent to pineapple bombs.

"A two-timing daddy and a trailing arbutus!" said Mabelle piercing Bulstrode with her scornful eyes

A MESSENGER-BOY came up with a communication from the Front Office notifying all writers that they must not smoke in the Exercise Yard. Bulstrode read it absently The interruption had given him time to marshal his thoughts.

"You don't understand," he said "You don't realize what it is like, being marooned in a motion-picture studio. What you have failed to appreciate is the awful yearning that comes over you for human society There you sit for weeks and weeks, alone in the great silence, and then suddenly you find a girl in your office, washed up by the tide and what happens? Instinctively you find yourself turning to her As an individual, she may be distasteful to you, but she is—how shall I put it?—a symbol of the world without I admit that I grabbed Miss Bootle. I own that I kissed her But it meant nothing It affected no vital issue. It was as if, locked in a dungeon cell, I had shown cordiality towards a pet mouse. You would not have censured me if you had come in and found me playing with a pet mouse For all the kisses I showered on Miss Bootle, deep down in me I was true to you. It was simply that the awful loneliness—the deadly propinquity Well take the case," said Bulstrode, "of a couple on a raft in the Caribbean Sea "

The stoniness of Mabelle's face did not soften

"Never mind the Caribbean Sea" she interrupted "I have nothing to say about the Caribbean Sea except that I wish somebody would throw you into it with a good, heavy brick round your neck This is the end, Bulstrode Mulliner I have done with you If we meet in the street, don't bother to raise your hat"

"It is Mr Schnellenhamer's hat"

"Well don't bother to raise Mr Schnellenhamer's hat. Because I shall ignore you. I shall cut you dead" She looked past him at Ed Murgatroyd, who was coming out of the office with a satisfied expression on his face. "Finished, Mr Murgatroyd?"

"All washed up. said the boot-legger "A nice clean job

Then perhaps you will escort me out of this Abode of Love

Okie, lady"

Mabelle glanced down with cold disdain at Bulstrode, who was clutching her despairingly

"There is something clinging to my skirt, Mr Murgatroyd she said Might I trouble you to brush it off."

A powerful hand fell on Bulstrode's shoulder A powerful foot struck him on the trousers-seat. He flew through the open door of the office, tripping over Genevieve Bootle, who was now writhing on the floor

Disentangling himself, he rose to his feet and dashed out The corridor was empty Mabelle Ridgway and Edward Murgatroyd had gone

A good many of my relations, near and distant (proceeded Mr Mulliner after a thoughtful sip at his hot Scotch and lemon), have found themselves in unpleasant situations in their time but none I am inclined to think in any situation quite so unpleasant as that in which my nephew Bulstrode now found himself It was as if he had stepped suddenly into one of those psychological modern novels where the hero's soul gets all tied up in knots as early as page twenty-one and never straightens itself out again

To lose the girl one worships is bad

enough in itself. But when, in addition, a man has got entangled with another girl, for whom he feels simultaneously and in equal proportions an overwhelming passion and a dull dislike—and when in addition to that he is obliged to spend his days working on a story like "Scented Sinners"—well, then he begins to realize how dark and sinister a thing this life of ours can be. Complex was the word that suggested itself to Bulstrode Mulliner.

He ached for Mabelle Ridgway. He also ached for Genevieve Bootle. And yet even while he ached for Genevieve Bootle, some inner voice told him that if ever there was a pill it was she. Sometimes the urge to fold her in his arms and the urge to haul off and slap her over the nose with a piece of blotting-paper came so close together that it was a mere flick of the coin which prevailed.

And then one afternoon when he had popped into the commissary for a frosted malted milk he tripped over the feet of a girl who was sitting by herself in a dark corner.

"I beg your pardon," he said, courteously, for a Mulliner even when his soul is racked never forgets his manners.

"Don't mention it, Bulstrode," said the girl.

Bulstrode uttered a stunned cry.

"You!"

He stared at her, speechless. In his eyes there was nothing but amazement, but in those of Mabelle Ridgway there shone a soft and friendly light.

"How are you, Bulstrode?" she asked.

Bulstrode was still wrestling with his astonishment.

"But what are you doing here?" he cried.

"I am working on 'Scented Sinners.' Mr Murgatroyd and I are doing a treatment together. It is quite simple," said Mabelle. "That day when I left you we started to walk to the stu-

*"Did you take a look at Paragraph 6, where it gives the penalties for breach of your contracts?" "No, don't read them," said Mr Schnellenhamer as Mabelle stretched out a hand. "You can take it from me they're some penalties."*

gate, and it so happened that as we passed, Mr Schnellenhamer was looking out of his window. A few moments later his secretary came running out and said he wished to see us. We went to his office, where he gave us contracts to sign. I think he must have

extraordinary personal magnetism,' said Mabelle pensively, 'for we both signed immediately though nothing was further from our plans than to join the writing staff of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum. I had intended to go back to New York, and Mr Murgatroyd was complaining that his bootlegging business must be going all to pieces without him. It seems to be one of those businesses that need the individual touch.' She paused. 'What do you think of Mr Murgatroyd, Bulstrode?'

'I dislike him intensely.'

'You wouldn't say he had a certain strange, weird fascination?'

'No.'

'Well, perhaps you're right,' said Mabelle, dubiously. 'You were certainly right about it being lonely in this studio. I'm afraid I was a little cross, Bulstrode, when we last met. I understand now. You really don't think there is a curious, intangible glamour about Mr Murgatroyd?'

'I do not.'

Well, you may be right, of course. Good-bye, Bulstrode, I must be going. I have already exceeded the seven and a quarter minutes which the Front Office allows female writers for the consumption of nut sundaes. If we do not meet again—'

But surely we're going to meet at the time."

Mabelle shook her head.

The Front Office has just sent out a communication to all writers, forbidding inmates of the Ohio State Penitentiary to associate with those in the Leper Colony. They think it unsettles them. So unless we run into one another in the commissary—well, good-bye, Bulstrode.

She bit her lip in sudden pain, and was gone.

It was some ten days later that the encounter at which Mabelle had hinted took place. The heaviness of a storm-tossed soul had brought Bulstrode to the commissary for a frosted malted milk once more, and there toying with—respectively—a Surprise Gloria Swanson and a Cheese Sandwich Maurice Chevalier were Mabelle Ridgway and Ed Murgatroyd. They were looking into each other's eyes with a silent passion in which an observer would have noted, there was a distinct admixture of distaste and repulsion.

Mabelle glanced up as Bulstrode reached the table.

Good afternoon," she said with a welcoming smile. I think you know my *fiancé*, Mr. Murgatroyd?

Bulstrode reeled.

Your what did you say?" he exclaimed.

We're engaged," said Mr. Murgatroyd, sombrely.

Since this morning," added Mabelle. It was at exactly six minutes past eleven that we found ourselves linked in a close embrace."

Bulstrode endeavoured to conceal his despair.

I hope you will be very happy," he said.

A swell chance," rejoined Mr. Murgatroyd. I'm not saying this beasel here doesn't exert a strange fascination over me, but I think it only fair to inform her here and now—before witnesses—that at the same time the mere sight of her makes me sick.

It is the same with me," said Mabelle. When in Mr. Murgatroyd's presence, I feel like some woman waiting for her demon lover and all the while I am shuddering at that awful stuff he puts on his hair.

The best hair-oil in Chicago," said Mr. Murgatroyd a little stiffly.

It is as if I were under some terrible hypnotic influence which urged me against the promptings of my true self to love Mr. Murgatroyd," explained Mabelle.

"Make that double, sister," said the bootlegger. "It goes for me too."

Precisely," cried Bulstrode, "how I feel towards my *fiancée*, Miss Bootle."

Are you engaged to that broad?" asked Mr. Murgatroyd.

I am.

Ed Murgatroyd paled and swallowed a mouthful of cheese sandwich. There was silence for a while.

I see it all," said Mabelle. We have fallen under the hideous spell of this place. It is as you said, Bulstrode, when you wanted me to take the case of a couple on a raft in the Caribbean Sea. There is a miasma in the atmosphere of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum lot which undoes all who come within its sphere of influence. And here I am pledged to marry a gargoyle like Mr. Murgatroyd.

And what about me," demanded the bootlegger. Do you think I enjoy being teamed up with a wren that doesn't know the first principles of needling beer? A swell helpmeet you're going to make for a man in my line of business!

And where do I get off?" cried Bulstrode passionately. My blood races at the sight of Genevieve Bootle, and yet all the while I know that she is one of God's prunes. The mere thought of marrying her appals me. Apart from the fact that I worship you, Mabelle, with every fibre of my being.

And I worship you, Bulstrode.

And I'm that way about Genevieve," said Mr. Murgatroyd.

There was another silence.

There is only one way out of this dreadful situation," said Mabelle. We must go to Mr. Schnellenhamer and hand in our resignations. Once we are free from this noxious environment, everything will adjust itself nicely. Let us go and see him immediately."

THEY did not see Mr. Schnellenhamer immediately, for nobody ever did. But after a vigil of two hours in the Reception Room, they were finally admitted to his presence, and they filed in and stated their case.

The effect on the President of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation, of their request that they be allowed to resign was stupendous. If they had been Cossacks looking in at the office to start a pogrom, he could not have been more moved. His eyes bulged, and his nose dropped like the trunk of an elephant which has been refused a peanut.

It can't be done," he said, curtly. He reached in the drawer of his desk, produced a handful of documents, and rapped them with an ominous decision. Here are the

contracts, duly signed by you in which you engage to remain in the employment of the Perfecto-Zizzbaum Corporation until the completion of the picture entitled 'Scented Sinners.' Did you take a look at Para 6, where it gives the penalties for breach of same? No, don't read them, he said as Mabelle stretched out a hand. 'You wouldn't sleep nights. But you can take it from me they're some penalties. We've had this thing before of writers wanting to run out on us, so we took steps to protect ourselves.

'Would we be taken for a ride?' asked Mr Murgatroyd, uneasily.

Mr Schnellenhamer smiled quietly, but did not reply. He replaced the contracts in the drawer and his manner softened and became more appealing. This man knew well when to brandish the iron fist and when to display the velvet glove.

'And anyway,' he said, speaking now in almost a fatherly manner, 'you wouldn't want to quit till the picture was finished. Of course, you wouldn't, not three nice, square-shooting folks like you. It wouldn't be right. It wouldn't be fair. It wouldn't be co-operation. You know what 'Scented Sinners' means to this organization. It's the biggest proposition we have. Our whole programme is built around it. We are relying on it to be our big smash. It cost us a barrel of money to buy 'Scented Sinners,' and naturally, we aim to get it back.'

He rose from his chair and tears came into his eyes. It was as if he had been some emotional football coach addressing a faint-hearted team.

'Stick to it!' he urged. 'Stick to it, folks! You can do it if you like. Get back in there and fight. Think of the boys in the Front Office rooting for you, depending on you. You wouldn't let them down? No, no, not you. You wouldn't let me down? Of course, you wouldn't. Get back in the game, then, and win—win—win . . . for dear old Perfecto-Zizzbaum and me.'

He flung himself into his chair, gazing at them with appealing eyes.

'May I read Para 6?' asked Mr Murgatroyd, after a pause.

'No, don't read Para 6,' urged Mr Schnellenhamer. 'Far far better not read Para 6.'

Mabelle looked hopelessly at Bulstrode.

'Come,' she said. 'It is useless for us to remain here.'

They left the office with dragging steps. Mr Schnellenhamer, a grave expression on his face, pressed the bell for his secretary.

'I don't like the look of things, Miss Stern,' he said. 'There seems to be a spirit of unrest among the 'Scented Sinners' gang. Three of them have just been in wanting to quit. I shouldn't be surprised if rebellion wasn't seething. Say, listen,' he asked keenly, 'nobody's been ill-treating them, have they?'

'Why the idea, Mr Schnellenhamer!'

'I thought I heard screams coming from their building yesterday.'

That was Mr Donkey. He was working on his treatment, and he had some kind of a fit. Frothed at the mouth and kept shouting 'No, no!' 'It isn't possible!' 'If you ask me,' said Miss Stern, 'it's just the warm weather. We most generally always lose a few writers this time of year.'

Mr Schnellenhamer shook his head.

'This ain't the ordinary thing of authors going cuckoo. It's something deeper. It's the spirit of unrest, or rebellion seething, or something like that. What am I doing at five o'clock?'

'Conferencing with Mr Levinsky.'

'Cancel it. Send round notice to all writers on 'Scented Sinners' to meet me on Stage Four. I'll give them a pep-talk.'

At a few minutes before five, accordingly, there debouched from the Leper Colony and from the Ohio State Penitentiary a motley collection of writers. There were young writers, old writers, middle-aged writers, writers with matted beards at which they plucked nervously, writers with horn-rimmed spectacles who muttered to themselves, writers with eyes that stared blankly or blinked in the unaccustomed light. On all of them 'Scented Sinners' had set its unmistakable seal. They shuffled listlessly along till they came to Stage Four, where they seated themselves on wooden benches, waiting for Mr Schnellenhamer to arrive.

Bulstrode had found a place next to Mabelle Ridgway. The girl's face was drawn and despondent.

'Edward is breaking in a new quart of hair-oil for the wedding,' she said after a moment of silence.

Bulstrode shivered.

'Genevieve,' he replied, 'has bought one of those combination eyebrow tweezers and egg-scramblers. The advertisement said that no bride should be without them.'

Mabelle drew her breath in sharply.

'Can nothing be done?' asked Bulstrode.

'Nothing,' said Mabelle dully. 'We cannot leave till 'Scented Sinners' is finished, and it never will be finished—never, never, never.' Her spiritual face was contorted for a moment. 'I hear there are writers who have been working on it for years and years. That grey-bearded gentleman over there, who is sticking straws in his hair,' she said, pointing. 'That is Mr Markey. He has the office next to ours,

and comes in occasionally to complain that there are spiders crawling up his wall. He has been doing treatments of 'Scented Sinners' since he was a young man.'

In the tense instant during which they stared at each other with mournful, hopeless eyes, Mr. Schnellenhamer bustled in and mounted the platform. He surveyed the gathering authoritatively, then clearing his throat, began to speak.

He spoke of Service and Ideals, of Co-operation and the Spirit That Wins to Success. He had just begun to touch on the glories of the Southern Californian climate, when the scent of a powerful cigar floated over the meeting, and a voice spoke.

"Hey!"

All eyes were turned in the intruder's direction. It was Mr. Isadore Levinsky, the chief business operative, who stood there, he with whom Mr. Schnellenhamer had had an appointment to conference.

"What's all this?" demanded Mr. Levinsky. "You had a date with me."

Mr. Schnellenhamer hurried down from the platform and drew Mr. Levinsky aside.

"I'm sorry, Izzy," he said. "I had to break our date. There's all this spirit of unrest broke out among the 'Scented Sinners' gang, and I thought I'd better talk to them. You remember that time five years ago when we had to call out the State Militia."

Mr. Levinsky looked puzzled.

"The what gang?"

"The writers who are doing treatments on 'Scented Sinners'. You know 'Scented Sinners' that we bought."

"But we didn't," said Mr. Levinsky.

"We didn't?" said Mr. Schnellenhamer surprised.

"Certainly we didn't. Don't you remember the Medulla-Oblongata-Glutz people outbid us?"

Mr. Schnellenhamer stood for a moment, musing.

"That's right, too," he said at length. "They did, didn't they?"

"Certainly they did.'

"Then the story doesn't belong to us at all?'

"Certainly it doesn't. M-O-G has owned it for the last eleven years."

Mr. Schnellenhamer smote his forehead.

"Of course. It all comes back to me now. I had quite forgotten.'

He mounted the platform once more.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said. "All work on 'Scented Sinners' will cease immediately. The studio has discovered that it doesn't own it."

It was a merry gathering that took place in the commissary of the Perfecto-Zuzzbaum Studio some half-hour later. Genevieve Bootle had broken her engagement to Bulstrode and was sitting with her hand linked in that of Ed. Murgatroyd. Mabelle Ridgway had broken her engagement to Ed. Murgatroyd and was stroking Bulstrode's arm. It would have been hard to find four happier people, unless you had stepped outside and searched among the horde of emancipated writers who were dancing the Carmagnole so buthely around the shoe-shining stand.

And what are you two good folks going to do now?" asked Ed. Murgatroyd, surveying Bulstrode and Mabelle with kindly eyes. "Have you made any plans?"

I came out here to strike Oil," said Bulstrode. "I'll do it now."

He raised a cheery hand and brought it down with an affectionate smack on the bootlegger's gleaming head.

Ha! ha!" chuckled Bulstrode.

Ha, ha!" roared Mr. Murgatroyd.

'Ha! ha!' tittered Mabelle and Genevieve.

A perfect *camaraderie* prevailed among these four young people, delightful to see.

No, but seriously," said Mr. Murgatroyd, wiping the tears from his eyes, "are you fixed all right? Have you got enough dough to get married on?"

Mabelle looked at Bulstrode. Bulstrode looked at Mabelle. For the first time, a shadow seemed to fall over their happiness.

We haven't," Bulstrode was forced to admit.

Ed. Murgatroyd slapped him on the shoulder.

"Then come and join my little outfit," he said, heartily. "I've always room for a personal friend. Besides, we're muscling into the North Side beer industry next month, and I shall need willing helpers."

Bulstrode clasped his hand, deeply moved.

"Ed.!" he exclaimed, "I call that square of you. I'll buy a machine-gun to-morrow."

With his other hand he sought Mabelle's and pressed it. Outside, the laughter of the mob had turned to wild cheering. A bonfire had been started, and Mr. Doakes, Mr. Noakes, Miss Faversham, Miss Wilson, Mr. Fotheringay, Mr. Mendelsohn, Mr. Markey, and the others were feeding it with their scripts of "Scented Sinners."

IN the Front Office, Mr. Schnellenhamer and Mr. Levinsky, suspending their seven hundred and forty-first conference for an instant, listened to the tumult.

"Makes you feel like Lincoln, doesn't it?" said Mr. Levinsky.

'Ah!" said Mr. Schnellenhamer.

They smiled indulgently. They were kindly men at heart, and they liked the girls and boys to be happy.

# ATALANTA

# WARWICK DEEPING

Illustrated by SEABRIGHT

THE sleeping-car attendant came to warn her, and to place her hand luggage in the corridor

"Beaulieu, Mamselle"

As if she did not know! She was standing looking at a blue bay and a black headland, and above it a sunset. Below her were the red tennis courts of the Hotel Bristol and on one of these courts a woman and a man were just finishing a knock up. The great white façade of the Hotel Bristol confronted the sunset like an iceberg. She was staying at the Hotel Bristol.

The train pulled up, the attendant passed her hand luggage to a porter. It included three racquets in presses, for Miss Joan Fortescue was very much a rising star and the courts of the Hotel Bristol had a particular significance for her. It was on these courts in the Beaulieu Tournament that she had first met that damned German woman Fräulein Fink. And Fräulein Fink had effaced her.

Well—this year she was out for the *revanche*. She was in pretty good form and completely fit. She left her keys and registered luggage ticket with the Bristol luggage-porter and got into the hotel bus. The Bristol Hotel was only just round the corner, but tennis and cinema stars are expected to arrive in chariots.

She was received most urbanely by a reception clerk who remembered her.

"Ah! Miss Fortescue—delighted—to see you."

Her manner was somewhat off-hand.

"You're giving me a decent room."

"Of course—Miss For-tes-cue—o—certainly."

He would show her the room. And had she enjoyed a pleasant journey? Yes, the courts were playing beautifully. He bowed her into the lounge, for in the eyes of a Frenchman she was reflected as a somewhat ravishing creature, so English and fair and tall. On the court—*psst!* she blew about like a feather, a white-and-gold feather.

"So many celebrities—here—Miss Fortescue."

She saw one instantly, that damned German woman mounted on the arm of a chair in which was seated a butter-headed boy. Fräulein Fink was laughing, and when she laughed she showed all her teeth like a horse. She showed her teeth at Joan Fortescue, she extended a hand.

"Halloo—Miss England. So glad."

"Evening, Fräulein."

The butter-headed boy who was an Austrian champion stood up and bowed.

"In form, Miss Fortescue?"

"No—rather rotten—this year."

Fräulein Fink laughed. She had an unpleasant laugh.

"We are all rotten—so rotten—and so modest."

Ironic beast! Joan passed on. She was carried up in the lift with the gentleman in the morning coat who had wonderful cotton eyelashes. He too did not like Fräulein Fink.

"You beat her this year, yes?"

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Joan felt tired and peevish. She gave a little fluck of the head.

"Oh, I don't suppose so."

She remembered last year and how she had been put out of poise by Fräulein Fink's purple bandeau and her eternal and complacent teeth.

There was a feud between them and temperamentally the Fräulein had proved herself the more resilient of the two. She could play to a gallery and especially so when her opponent was looking a trifle grim. She would indulge herself in airs and graces, little leaps and caracoles of laughter. She was so polite, so gracious to an opponent who was a little heated. Joan accepted the room. She ordered tea to be sent up. She unpacked some of her immediate necessaries, and her mouth was tight and compressed.

She was saying to herself: Smile, smile. You simply mustn't get ratty this year. But the bother of it was that Fräulein Fink always made her feel that way.

Morning. The tournament did not begin until the following day, and Joan was out on the courts at ten. She had arranged for the Bristol pro. to play her a practice single. He was a somewhat famous person.

flamboyantly frank, and full of élan. She was out of form: the light bothered her. She kept over-driving, and that wretched slice betrayed itself in her back-hand.

He was blunt about her back-hand.

"Follow — through. Right shoulder down."

"I know."

She was annoyed. She knew that when she was feeling a little temperamental, and out of form, her wretched back-hand betrayed these failings. The clean shot would not come, and the smoothness was absent.

The pro. made her run up and volley.

"Pee-pee-pee."

It was his quaint and characteristic cry. But she was off her volleying also. Thank the Lord, she had drawn a rabbit in the first round.

Perfect weather, with the wind in the north, but gently so, and the sea marvellous. She went on to the court at eleven to play her rabbit, a Frenchwoman, a Mme. Boulanger. On this first day the attendance was somewhat thin, but Joan made a point of never looking at spectators. They were just so many rather silly faces and rows and rows of chairs.

She and Mme. Boulanger knocked up. The umpire was ready on his stand, the ball-boys waiting. The service was with Joan, and an inattentive ball-boy was staring into space. She liked three balls for service.

"Ball."

Her voice was sharp. Her glance happened to go beyond the boy and rest upon a man who was sitting in the second row, a youngish and rather intense-looking person. He was staring at her with quite unnecessary interest. It was the kind of scrutiny that penetrated a player's concentration, and

*Her glance happened to go beyond the boy and rest upon a man who was sitting in the second row, who was staring at her with quite unnecessary interest*

became like a piece of grit in her consciousness. She was vaguely annoyed.

THE game began. Mme. Boulanger might be classed as a rabbit, but she was one of those persistent and steady players who are capable of putting out a tigress when the tigress is out of form and unused to the southern light. Joan lost the first two games. Her service wouldn't function, she was overdriving, and Mme. Boulanger ran about and scooped everything back.

Joan felt hot. What an exhibition! She ran for and played a back-hand shot in the corner, and the ball nearly hit the stop netting. Idiot. She happened to glance aside—something seemed to draw her glance. She met those particular eyes. They were as bad as the camera.

Actually she gave him a look that said, "Oh, damn you, don't stare like that. It puts me off."

She felt more hot. What a lapse. To allow herself to flash a message at one of those anonymous faces. She was doing just what she had schooled herself not to do, losing her poise. She steadied herself, but her game would not arrive. She lost the first set to the Frenchwoman.

In the cross-over she found herself looking in the direction of the dark young man. He was leaning forward—he seemed to smile faintly and significantly. Did he find her lack of form amusing? Was she indeed affording him an exhibition? Silly ass! But was not she the silly ass? She was conscious of a moment of self revealment. She was behaving like a spoilt child who was angry because she was not getting the self applause that pleased her.

And suddenly she found her form. Her feet were just where they should be, her sighting and timing perfect. She moved about the court like a blown feather.

The man was watching her. She was quite delightful to watch, long limbed, supple, graceful, with her fair head and grave young face. She tantalized him—because he was lame, and could not play the game he had loved to play. He had to sit and stare and write books. He was writing rather successful books, but scribbling is not living.

He wanted her to win, he willed her to win. He wanted yes—just what did he want? Casually to come and watch a game, and be suddenly and absurdly smitten by one of the players. Ridiculous. But how she moved. And suddenly he thought of her as Atalanta—but an Atalanta with whom a man with a groggy leg could not run races. She was like so much of life—beyond him.

She won the next two sets easily. She was smiling. Said someone in a chair: "Bad temperament. She can only smile when she's winning."

Julian Peters glanced sharply at the speaker. It wasn't true. She had been annoyed with herself for being off her game. Women said such feline things.

He watched her go off the court with her opponent. She had slipped on a light blue knitted coat, and her colour was the colour of a shell.

To someone in the hotel lounge she said: "I played most utter tripe. Something put me off. I wish people wouldn't stare and fidget."

The second day was much as the first. The man was there in the same chair. She saw him at once and wished him away. She had to play a Spanish girl, an opponent of different quality, a creature as swift and as light as herself. She began badly. In running to retrieve an angle drive she slipped and fell against the knees of an elderly and eminent gentleman in the first row. She saw a face, two sympathetic eyes, sudden solicitude. Confound him!

The eminent gentleman raised her.

"I hope you are not hurt?"

She was abrupt, rude. Making an ass of herself.

"No, not a bit."

She ran back to the fray, and played with temper in her eyes. Had that fellow with the stare looked shocked? Well, what business had he to be shocked because she had been a little abrupt? She fought Spain at speed, the blonde against the black. She won in two straight sets. But she was not pleased. She thought: "If that fellow sits there and stares when I am playing the Fink I shall get temperamental."

That evening Lady Glendower gave a dinner party at the Hote. Bristol, and Julian Peters was one of her guests. Joan's table was not three yards away from the Glendower table, but Miss Fortescue was so placed that she could not see Peters, though Mr. Peters saw her. He was sitting on Lady Glendower's left; she liked him, he both amused and interested her.

"I see—Miss Fortescue is staying here."

"Do you want to be introduced?"

"Would you recommend it?"

"These tennis people get terribly spoilt."

Julian smiled at her.

"I'll take the risk."

Afterwards, the hotel danced—but Julian could not dance. He sat in a little crowd of chairs with his rubber-tipped stick hidden away. Lady Glendower and her party were dancing, and when, at the end of the dance, the crowd streamed back to its seats, Lady Glendower brought Miss Fortescue with her.

Mr. Peters—Miss Fortescue.

Julian made an attempt to rise, but the movement appeared so casual that Joan treated it as such. The man with the eyes? Just a coincidence. She nodded at him

Delighted

She had not seen his stick and lame leg. If a lad could be so slow in getting up, she could be still more brisk in effacing him. She turned to Lady Glendower. She did not see the little badge of pain that she had pinned upon Julian Peters's coat. She joined Lady Glendower's party, and so large was it that it spread itself considerably. Miss Fortescue and Lady Glendower were five chairs distant from Mr Peters.

Lady Glendower lit a cigarette.

"Not quite in form yet, Joan."

Miss Fortescue looked annoyed. Why stress the obvious? And Lady Glendower smiled like Mona Lisa. This young woman.

Said Miss Fortescue. "It takes me two days to get used to the light. Besides, things put one off."

"I suppose so."

"I'd be most awfully bucked if you would do me a favour. It is rather a curious coincidence—but—that lad you just introduced—happens to be my pet snag."

"What—poor Julian?"

Her tone was challenging and Miss Fortescue laughed.

"Only—joking—you know. But he sits and stares."

At you?

"Rather so. Regular jettatura."

"You'd like me to tell him?"

"Only joking, you know. But he does put me off."

"How reprehensible!"

THE Austrian champion came to carry off Miss Fortescue for a waltz, and Lady Glendower moved to an empty chair next to Julian. She could not help noticing that his glances followed Miss Fortescue. Poor lamb! How unsubtle of him to be attracted by a little tin goddess.

I have a message for you, my dear."

Julian's eyelids flickered. He had allowed himself to forget that other people could be socially proximate.

I beg your pardon——

"You have been doing a dreadful thing, Julian."

"I?"

"Yes, disturbing the concentration of a celebrity."

Who? How?

"Miss Fortescue confided to me—that you sit and stare and put her off her game."

He flinched.

"But, really—she moves—rather beautifully. I didn't know. How very *bête*."

"Very," said Lady Glendower. "One wouldn't expect a hard young person like Miss Fortescue to be so sensitive, but, then—the self-consciousness of these picture-paper people—is rather—ghastly."

You mean it annoyed—Miss Fortescue?

Apparently."

She told you?

Lady Glendower nodded.

I'm terribly sorry."

She patted his sleeve.

Quite—unnecessary. The complete egotist. Quite insufferable—some of these—stars. I heard one of them ask to have the orchestra stopped—when she was playing. It performs in the gardens, you know."

Mr Peters smiled wistfully.

I did not mean to stare like that. I'll refrain—in the future."

No, go and stare, my dear. I'd like to see the Fink woman beat her, even though she is a German."

Julian changed the position of his lame leg.

"Being a crock cuts one off—rather. But does she think of nothing but——?"

"Nothing but—cups, Julian," and her ladyship lit another cigarette.

The third day.

Joan had gone to the courts with her three racquets, and had forgotten her eye-shade. Very fatuous of her. She ran back through the gardens, and coming up the path she met a man. He was lame, he helped himself with a stick. he raised his hat, looked at her and then looked away.

She nodded and smiled. She thought "Why, he's a poor cripple." Something in those very sensitive eyes of his had surprised her. He had seemed self-conscious and guilty, as though the Glendower woman had told him that she—Miss Fortescue—resented being stared at.

She had left her eye-shade in a chair in the lounge. She recovered it and hurried back, for she was due to play the lady champion of Greece. In fact, they were calling her name. Miss Fortescue. Miss Fortescue. As she went on to the court she could not help glancing in the direction of that particular chair. It was empty.

So, the Glendower woman had told him. Well, really, hadn't the woman any sense of humour?

She found herself bothered by that empty chair, which was preposterous. The man was lame, and she had hurt him. People shouldn't be so absurdly sensitive. But she was playing Mlle. Xanthos, and she was two games down to her in the first set. Oh, hang empty chairs. She gripped her concentration, and bent it to the crisis. This was the semi-final. unless she survived it she would not meet the Fink woman. She did survive, but very narrowly so. The

Greek girl took the score to five all in the third set.

Afterwards, she strolled across to watch Fräulein Fink, who was playing in a mixed double on No. 3 Court. She saw Julian Peters there in somebody's vacant chair. She saw him applaud one of the Fink volleys.

'Oh, great shot!'

She was piqued. Had she driven him into the Fink family?

The fourth day was a blank day so far as she was concerned, for the finals of the singles were being reserved for the last day. She was not playing in any of the doubles. She was supposed to be less potent in doubles. She did not combine well. Did she meditate upon her particular sin, as she walked along the sea path in the direction of St. Jean and the Cape? People said of her that she was a hard young woman, which was not quite true. She was immature, full of the urge of her youth and its forcefulness, a striding girl, head up, eyes to the front, lips and breasts firm and full. The mystery of things was yet to be, but on this perfect February morning she was moved to feel the beauty of sea and sky and headland. Those midnight pines, this water of varying shades of blueness. She passed through St. Jean and took the sandy track along the headland where the sea and the pines sang to each other. It was very solitary. She saw nothing but a roving yellow dog, who looked askance at her when she spoke to him.

Funny creatures, French dogs.

But there were other funny creatures in the world.

SHE heard someone calling.

"Hallo—hallo!"

The voice was a man's, and English. It came from among the pines on the hillside. She paused to look, but it was some seconds before she picked out the figure among the trees. It seemed to be half lying, half sitting in the heather.

She turned up the hill.

"Did you call?"

"Yes—I'm awfully sorry, but could you——"

The recognition was sudden and simultaneous. She was conscious of a curious pang. The lame man!

He was shy and apologetic.

"Awfully sorry to bother you. It's my wretched leg. It drags a bit, and I caught my toe on a root scrambling around here."

Almost his face suggested shame, that he should have to appeal to a woman who was so strong and lithe and swift. He had been that once.

Miss Fortescue was other than Miss Fortescue. Why, she did not know or care. Something stirred in her, a strong, strange, and instinctive thing.

"You've hurt yourself!"

"Just a twist. I shall have to get a lift back. So rotten being a crock. And I used to be a wing three-quarter!"

His protest hurt her. Really, how beastly self-centred one could be. Think of nothing but hitting a ball! She knelt down and looked at his leg.

"I'm so sorry. Ought you to have a doctor?"

"Oh, no. sometimes the beastly thing behaves like this, and I have to humour it for a day or two. If I could get a taxi as far as the road."

She looked at him.

"How did it happen?"

His eyes opened wide to hers. She was so different. She.

"I just caught my toe."

"No—I mean—the leg?"

"Oh, a motor smash."

"What bad luck. I can get a taxi or a carriage in St. Jean."

"Could you?"

"Of course!"

"It's awfully good of you."

"Oh, no. I'll go at once."

How absurd of her! She was suddenly hot and confused. She got up, and smiled—not at him—but over him. Her face was a different face.

"I won't be ten minutes."

She ran.

She found a carriage in St. Jean waiting by the little harbour. Her French was not very good, but she managed to explain to the man that he was to drive to the headland and wait for her. Someone had sprained a leg. Returning, she found Julian sitting there with the air of a patient child. He smiled at her.

"I've got a carriage. But do you think you can manage?"

He looked shy. If someone would lend him a shoulder? She understood. She helped him up, and made him put an arm across her shoulders, her left arm encircled him.

"Rather like a three-legged race!"

She watched him take a step, moving to keep in rhythm with him.

"Put your weight on me. That's right!"

"Yes, I can manage."

It took them five minutes to reach the carriage, and in those five minutes a completely new attitude to life had affected both of them. The intimacy of an impersonal occasion had become self-conscious. That racquet arm of hers was supporting a live thing. She got him into the carriage. He was a little flushed, whether with pain or pleasure or both, she could not say. Her own face had come into sudden bloom.

*The recognition was sudden and simultaneous. She was conscious of a curious pang. The lame man!*

"Where do you want to go?"

"Oh, the Bedford."

The carriage rattled back to St Jean and they sat self-consciously side by side, demure and dignified. They had become suddenly shy of each other, two young souls in profile. But their silence was like a pause between two musical movements.

He said: "I'm awfully sorry. I upset your game. It never occurred to me—that——"

She held her breath. So the old wretch had told him!

"But—really—you didn't."

"Yes, I did. It bothered you. You see, I can't move, and it was rather good watching you move."

She was speechless. And then she said in rather an off-hand way: "I wonder if it's worth while."

He looked at her a little anxiously.

"What?"

"Rushing about—banging a ball, and making such a beastly business of it. I think I'll lose to-morrow."

"Please, don't."

I don't think I should mind much,

He said: "I should."

When the carriage drew up outside the hotel, she jumped out quickly.

"I'll get a porter."

And then she saw that he had something to say.

"Might I come to-morrow?"

Her eyes met his.

"But you can't. You mustn't."

"Oh yes, I could. I've still got my old splint and a crutch. Kept in reserve, you know. But if it's going to put you off your game. And I won't stare."

Her face had a new mystery.

"I'd like you to come, if you want to. No, it won't worry me."

She ran up the hotel steps to fetch the concierge to help him.

IT was a crowded day. When she walked on to the court with the Fink woman she looked towards that particular place. He was there. He raised his hat, and she gave him a little wave of the racquet. Fräulein Fink, lean, kinky-haired, all teeth flashed them at the crowd. Hands clapped. Fräulein Fink smiled upon the world. Her big nose seemed to transfix victory. She smiled upon her opponent. Oh, yes, she was feeling supremely confident and Miss Fortescue was looking nervous.

The game began in an atmosphere of tension. The German girl was at the top of her form, and she won the first two games with supreme ease. Joan was netting or driving out. Most of her first services were faults. The crowd's tension relaxed. The affair looked like being a walk-over, and the crowd began to be a little sorry for Joan.

Their compassion was premature. Suddenly, and apparently for no reason at all, she found herself and one of those sudden changes came over the game. She had been fumbling and asleep, but now her thrusts were deep and true, her counters cunning and swift. Her drives went deep into the corner, pitching within a few inches of the base line. Her anticipation became exquisite. She ran in on some of those deep drives, intercepted the return and put the ball away.

The crowd grew clamorous. Fräulein Fink was still all teeth and smile, but her eyes were anxious. She began to lob the English girl, but her lobs lacked length and subtlety. Joan killed most of them, or gave back more deadly lobs.

First set to Miss Fortescue at 6—4.

Julian Peters seemed to be sitting on a hot chair. He squirmed. The lady next him became annoyed. Why couldn't the man sit still?

In the second set Joan lapsed. She became cautious. She lost that set, though it was a long-drawn duel. Both girls were all out, but it became obvious that Miss Fortescue was the fitter of the two. The German's big mouth was open—not to smile but for air. Her nose looked pinched.

Before the third set Miss Fortescue did an unconventional thing. She went and spoke to somebody in a chair, and that somebody said to her: "Go in and volley. Put them deep in the corners, like you did in the first. You'll win."

She did. She attacked from the first stroke. She had a tiring opponent running to and fro. Once more—her anticipation was beautiful, her volleying crisp and deadly. She played like a man, and on her day few men could have beaten her. She won the final set at 6—2.

Applause, hand shakes, smiles, a very eminent gentleman standing forward to congratulate both ladies, a lame man with a crutch hobbling behind rows of chairs to stand at a gate.

He met her coming out.

"Splendid! I knew you could. The best game you ever played."

She looked strangely confused.

"I felt—like—playing in my sleep."

He laughed.

"Well, it was a wonderful dream."

And that was what he imagined his own affair to be, a beautiful, tantalizing and poignant incident, a little bitter to him in its beauty, perhaps, but just a day in the life of Atalanta. He could not play with her. She was—in a sense—a public person, a draw, a prize for the photographers, but not for him. This crowd was dispersing, but other

crowds would gather at Monte Carlo and Menton and Cannes, and Joan Fortescue would perform before them. No, he was not going to Monte Carlo or Menton or Cannes.

The Hotel Bristol was concluding the week's festival with a *Bal Fleuri*. Everybody was going to it, but Julian did not go. He remained at the Bedford Hotel nursing his leg and a secret and absurd passion.

Said the Austrian champion to Joan as they fox-trotted: "You are going to Cannes, of course?"

She seemed tired, a little distraught. Her glances wandered and were not for him, which was unusual, for he had been given to understand that all women were mad about him.

No, I'm scratching.

'Scratching?'

Yes, feeling stale."

Which, of course, on her day's brilliance, was absurd. He could only suppose that she was shy of meeting the Fink woman a second time.

A DREAM and an awakening—but why either? She sat in the gardens and walked to St. Jean, but she saw no Julian. Had he gone on to Cannes? She climbed the steps of the Bedford Hotel and, feeling absurdly self-conscious, she inquired casually for Mr. Peters.

How is Mr. Peters? I hope his leg is better?'

She was told that Mr. Peters had gone out for a drive.

She remembered that wonderful drive of theirs. She was feeling acutely romantic. She walked to St. Jean, and on to the headland. She would go and sit among the pine trees where he and she had come together for a moment in their lives. She came upon a taxi waiting under the pines. Had he—? She held her breath for a moment, she hesitated. Was he, too, up there re-dreaming a dream?

She saw him. She waved a hand. She ascended through the sunlight and shadow. She saw that he was trying to rise.

'Don't. Please—don't move.'

His face was a complete self-betrayal, and hers was not much better. She sat down.

He said: 'I thought you had gone to Cannes."

'No. I scratched."

'Scratched? But you——"

'Oh, I'm rather stale. I'm rather off rushing about and hitting things. I think I want to sit and stare."

He looked infinitely grave.

'That's what I do. I have to—but you. Do you know what it means?'

She looked at the sea showing blue between the pines.

"I'd like to find out. One must miss such a lot just rushing about. More than you miss, perhaps."

He prodded the ground with his stick.

'There's a difference. If you get tired of sitting—and staring—you can rush off. I can't. I watch life and scribble about it. Of course there is a lot in life—my sort of life, but it's limited.'

She watched that restless stick of his.

Not so limited perhaps—as—mine. I'm reading one of your books.'

He glanced at her sharply.

'Yes, I do get some movement in books, but wouldn't that bore you?'

She had the air of a woman marvelling over some mystery.

'No. It didn't bore you watching me play?"

'Hardly. I could always watch you."

She gave him a shy little laugh, and a glimpse of her eyes.

'Doesn't that cut both ways?'

And suddenly he had hold of her hand, and for half a minute they sat in silence.

Then, he said: "It's too wonderful. I simply—had it at first sight. But it can't go on. I can't ask you to marry a crock.'

She looked at the sea.

'Then if you don't ask me—— Won't it be rather hard—for the real crock—that's me.

'My dear, my——'

They looked steadily at each other, and kissed.

So, in spite of mutual protestations, a star fell from the firmament of the tennis world. Mr. Peters insisted that Mrs. Peters must not disappoint her public, and Mrs. Peters humoured him and herself, but when Mrs. Peters became a wife and something more than a wife, the rhythm of life altered. Some people said 'What a pity", others 'How very old-fashioned," but Joan was not listening to what people said of her, or what the Press had ceased to say.

# SOMERSET
## — the Man

SOMERSET MAUGHAM is the enigma of the literary world. He is one of the foremost writers of the day. His plays and books have in recent years brought him a large fortune. Moreover, it is not only with the general public that he is so popular; the critics and his fellow writers, too, regard him as a master of his craft. And yet he remains a stranger aloof and withdrawn from the world. Less is known about him—his character, his habits, his life in the past and the present—than about any other modern writer of his eminence. His personality is cloaked in silence.

That silence, however, is his own wish. He has maintained it deliberately for many years now—ever since, in fact, he woke up one morning to find himself famous, with three of his plays running simultaneously in London. He has a horror of the blatant publicity methods employed by many modern writers, and in his novel, 'Cakes and Ale,' he has satirized those methods brilliantly. He feels, quite rightly, that a writer's business lies in his work, not in showing himself off like a film star.

But there is an even stronger reason why he will not let himself be lionized, why he views his ever-increasing success with a shrug of his shoulders, an indifference that is certainly not assumed. It has come too late in his life. He was thirty-four when his first successful play was produced. To some people that may not seem very long for him to have had to wait for recognition, but you must remember that his first novel, 'Liza of Lambeth,' was published (in 1897) when the author was only twenty-three, and on the strength of the good reviews it received from the critics, he decided to throw over his career as a doctor, for which he had just qualified, to devote himself entirely to writing.

He did not realize what a challenge he was offering to Fate. For the next few years he met with so little success that he

*One of the earliest portraits of the famous novelist. He is seen with his uncle outside the vicarage where he was brought up*

# MAUGHAM
## and His Method

literally almost starved. His subsequent novels were failures. The Society hostesses that had taken him up on the publication of his first novel quickly dropped him again, and ignored his existence completely until he finally succeeded in re-establishing himself—as a dramatist.

Eleven years is a long time, especially when you are young and an artist with an artist's hyper-sensitive reactions to life. Something died in him: his belief in the essential goodness of human nature, and in its place there came into being a hard, indestructible core deep down in him that no amount of subsequent success has ever been able to thaw. He has never been able either to forget or forgive, to eradicate completely from his mind the memories of the physical and spiritual sufferings which he had to endure through that long weary period when his novels didn't sell, his short stories were returned with monotonous regularity (THE STRAND was the one exception, for I remember him telling me once how this magazine bought one of his stories for twenty pounds which paid for a summer holiday that year, an unexpected luxury), and no manager in London had the courage to produce his plays, lying at that time, dusty on their desks—"Lady Frederick," "Mrs. Dot," and "Jack Straw"—which were subsequently to prove box-office winners. And so, when finally success returned to him, after the production by the Stage Society of his play "A Man of Honour," it had a bitter-sweet taste for him.

That is the chief reason for the sense of brooding bitterness that colours all his work—detectable, too, in his face if you peer under the emotionless mask that he always wears to the world. It is there in his mouth, drawn back in a sardonic line, but, most of all, in his eyes. He has the most extraordinary eyes. They are very dark and piercing and deep-set, and though they gaze

By GODFREY WINN

at you through a carefully arranged veil of indifference sometimes the veil lifts, and then you will see mirrored there the soul of a disillusioned man

There is a mesmeric quality about his eyes. Against your will, they draw the truth out of you. Mesmerized, you find it impossible to bluff or lie. It is always said that Somerset Maugham takes all his plots from real life (a statement that so far from denying the author always defends with the counter-assertion, that the only novels that are worth reading are those which have their roots in reality) and in his pursuit of copy he must every day of his life give thanks for this strange compelling quality of his eyes that not only enables him to see through the most elaborate of façades but also to draw confidences out of all kinds and types of people

*At the age of 26, three years after he had published his first novel, "Liza of Lambeth."*

There is nothing remarkable about the rest of his features. Nor does his neat, quiet appearance suggest a writer. He goes to a good tailor, he is always well-groomed, there is an air of unfussy authority about him that is more usually encountered in the world of high finance than in that of literature. Indeed, you might mistake him at a first glance for a successful business man who had laid the foundation of his fortune in the East.

Why the East? Because somehow there is a look of the East about him, as though in some previous incarnation he had been, say, a Chinese mandarin. This feeling is heightened by his passionate love of Eastern things. His villa in the South of France, his permanent home to-day, is full of treasures that he has carried back from his distant travels—carved jade, golden shrines, to Buddha statuettes of Chinese gods.

It is extremely difficult to make Somerset Maugham talk about himself. Anything in the nature of an interview is torture to him. He still suffers acutely from an inferiority complex first engendered in his youth, the effects of which are to be seen in his work in his ruthless castigation of human follies, especially feminine ones, though its influence on the course and conduct of his own life is only perceived by his more intimate friends. Unless, of course, one has read his novel "Of Human Bondage," which is not only his best work but also one of the few books written during the present century to which the epithet "great" can be truly applied, and has realized to what an extent that is his own life story.

A little time ago I asked him if this book really was his autobiography. He replied with a typical shrug of the shoulders, that truth and fiction were so mixed up in the book that it would take an endless time for him to go through it with me and say that this is exactly what happened, that is imagined that he heard from So-and-so. Therefore, the best thing to do, I feel, is to compare the facts with the fiction and see how and where they tally.

First the "fiction." The book tells the life story of a boy of good parentage, who orphaned almost at birth, is brought up in a country vicarage by an uncle and aunt, is sent by them first to a neighbouring cathedral school where, owing to the possession of a club foot he is bullied and despised by the other boys, and later, at the age of seventeen, to Heidelberg University for a year, where for the first time the artistic side of his nature, cramped by the rigid, spartan atmosphere of the vicarage, receives stimulus and expression.

Articled on his return to a London firm of accountants, he hates the life so much that at the end of a year he revolts and runs away to Paris to study art. (This section of the book, revealing La Vie de Bohème in its true light, is brilliantly done, and Somerset Maugham confessed to me that these scenes are pure autobiography.)

Later, returning to England on the death of his uncle the hero falls in love with a worthless creature, and decides to

*W. Somerset Maugham at the age of 20.*

attached to the British Embassy. In 1884 his father died (his mother had died two years earlier), and he was placed henceforth in the charge of a clergyman uncle whose living was at Whitstable. He was educated first at King's School, Canterbury and later at Heidelberg University.

So far, you see, almost identical stories except for the fact that in the book the boy had a club foot and in real life Somerset Maugham possesses a very marked stammer which makes talking an embarrassment to him even to-day, and at school certainly made him an easy prey for would-be humorists. Hence a feeling that he was not as other boys, a feeling out of which grew the inferiority complex that has coloured and harried all his future life.

The two stories continue, too, along very similar lines. London, with Somerset Maugham spending his days, not, it is true, in learning accountancy, but in studying medicine at St. Thomas's instead and every minute of his free time in writing. And the result was "Liza of Lambeth," published in 1897, the same year in which he passed his final medical exams. It was the parting of the ways for him. Medicine or literature, which was it to be? He made up his mind and went abroad, not at first to Paris (as in the book), but to Spain, where he spent most of the next three years, writing other but unsuccessful novels, until all his savings

reinvest his tiny capital in a foolish attempt to increase his income. The concern fails, he is now penniless and alone. The rest of the book is concerned with his desperate efforts to make both ends meet. There is no indignity of soul and body that he has not to endure. He descends to the lowest depths. He no longer believes in anything. And then at last the tide turns. He makes friends with a certain family who take him under their wing, and the book ends with his marriage to their daughter.

So much for the so-called fiction. Now for the actual facts. Somerset Maugham's childhood was spent in Paris, where his father was a lawyer

*The garden of the Villa Mauresque, the author's present-day home in the South of France*

*Reproduced by courtesy of the Artist*

*The painting by Mr Gerald F Kelly, R.A., of Mr. Somerset Maugham at the age of 40. The picture has been bought by the Chantrey Bequest, and is being exhibited at this year's Royal Academy.*

were nearly exhausted and he was forced to return to England in search of more settled work. He took a tiny flat near Victoria and began to haunt editorial offices. In vain. No one wanted his work, and in 1904 he was compelled to give up his flat and almost in despair, he decided to go to Paris, where he felt that there were

so many other poverty-stricken artists that his own poverty would be easier to bear, and would also pass unnoticed. His life in Paris is described in detail in the book, and there is only one addition that I would like to add to that description and it takes the form of a quotation out of Arnold Bennett's diary —

"Somerset Maugham came to tea. He has a very calm, almost lethargic, demeanour. He took two cups of tea with pleasure and absolutely refused a third, one knew instantly from his tone that nothing would induce him to take a third. He ate biscuits and gaufrettes very quickly, almost greedily one after the other without a pause, and then suddenly stopped.

Just when things seemed absolutely desperate and he was almost starving, things suddenly took a turn for the better as in the book, only in this case he was befriended, not by a family but by a society—the Stage Society, who decided to produce his play 'A Man of Honour'.

Somerset Maugham has described how he sat in a box, with an empty stomach and without a penny in his pocket. As he gazed down at the smart London audience and listened to their laughter and their enthusiastic applause he remembered cynically that they were the same crowd who, ten years previously, had hailed 'Liza of Lambeth' with delight and then had so swiftly forgotten him not caring whether he starved. Would the same thing happen again?

But this time success had come to stay. His other plays were brought out of managers' drawers, dusted quickly cast, and put into rehearsal. Soon he had three plays running at once. Publishers and editors now fell over each other in their desire to 'cash in' on his success, fashionable hostesses gave parties for him, invited him to roar, as a nice tame literary lion should in their Park Lane drawing-rooms. To their enormous surprise, Somerset Maugham refused with that icy politeness which is his most terrifying attribute. They could not understand that refusal, because they could not know that his sudden flood of success meant one thing for him and one thing only—security.

He began to save money quietly and methodically, so that never again he should be poor and defenceless and hungry, never again be placed in the intolerable position of having to beg for work. By the time the War came, he had succeeded in amassing the nucleus of his present fortune. The next four years he worked not for himself but for his country, as a Secret Service agent. His wonderful knowledge of languages enabled him to go everywhere unsuspected and unchallenged. He spent a long time in Russia and he has described some of his adventures as a spy in 'Ashenden" another of his novels that are taken from real life.

Soon after the War he set off on a voyage of discovery round the world and for the next few years he was very little in Europe. Some of that time was spent in America but more in the Far East, journeying from one outpost of Empire to another, but all the time, wherever he was, in China or Honolulu or the Malay States, he was watching and recording, seeking out the secrets of the people that he encountered in outlandish spots. Nothing escaped those dark, relentless, mesmeric eyes, and the results of his observations were later given to the world under the titles of "East of Suez," "Rain," 'The Letter," 'The Painted Veil' 'The Casuarina Tree," his latest novel 'The Narrow Corner' and lastly a travel book which displays quite a new side to his character, a gentler rather whimsical side.

But satiated at last, and suddenly homesick, Somerset Maugham returned again to

*Over the front door of the Villa Mauresque is to be seen the mystic sign which Mr. Somerset Maugham uses on his notepaper, the covers of his books, and even on his bridge cards.*

England, and in connexion with that return he tells a rather amusing story. Entering his club he was greeted by one of the older members who exclaimed not uncordially:

"Hello, Maugham, I haven't seen your face lately." The returned exile was just about to roll off his tongue a list of the impressive, far-off places, such as Rangoon and Bangkok and Mandalay, that he had visited, when the other continued: "Been to Brighton, I suppose. . . ."

ONCE more there arose the problem of finding suitable background for himself and his work, and this time Somerset Maugham decided to go and live permanently in the South of France, where he bought a very beautiful villa in 1927. The climate of the Riviera has always been to his liking, at the same time, he is within easy reach of London should business call him there. He usually comes "home" for a few weeks when a new play of his is being produced, but for nine months of the year now he lives at Cap Ferrat in peaceful seclusion, seeing only the people he really wants to see, accepting few invitations from the outside world.

His lovely Villa Mauresque is perfect and is protected from all harm by the sign against the Evil Eye that has been placed over its entrance. This sign is used by Somerset Maugham as other people use a family crest. It is stamped on his notepaper, on the covers of his published works, even on his bridge cards. I do not know to what extent he puts his trust in it, for he is very non-committal on the subject.

The Villa Mauresque is complete in every respect. It has everything. A beautiful garden stretching for nearly a mile, a perfect hard tennis court, a swimming pool perched on the side of the hill, surrounded by glorious oleander trees and built in the Roman fashion, blue tiled and with orange cushions strewn around its margin on which one may lie at peace all day in the sun, gazing down at the magnificent sweep of the bay; a wonderful terrace, planted with orange trees, where in summer one lunches, shaded from the sun by the most cunning arrangement of grass matting supported on poles in the Polynesian fashion, a memento of Somerset Maugham's visit to the South Sea Islands and where in the evening there are Magical Nights Entertainments, a dinner party consisting, perhaps, of Michael Arlen, Mary Garden, the famous singer, Edward Molyneux and Jo Davidson, the sculptor who has done a magnificent head of Maugham talking far into the night to the accompaniment of a chorus of frogs, with the austere white façade of the villa's walls for a back-cloth.

The villa is all-white, indoors as well as out. It reminds you instinctively of the houses you see in Arab cities with their flat roofs, their box-like shape, their perfect symmetry. Once inside you discover to your surprised delight that this giant box is hollow, built round a courtyard where the soft splash of a fountain, eternally playing refreshes and cools the senses. You glance upwards, beyond and above the exquisite slender pillars, supporting the colonnade and there on the flat roof of the villa nestles another white box, a minute copy of its parent.

What is that? you ask, mystified, and are told that it is the owner's writing-room, specially designed by himself, and here every morning he retreats after breakfast with clockwork regularity and stays until the gong sounds for lunch. He does not believe in waiting for inspiration, he makes inspiration come to him. For half an hour after his very early breakfast he smokes a pipe and reads some philosophical book. Then he is ready for the labours of the day and climbs the stairs to his retreat.

Once there, no one, not even his secretary, dare disturb him. And few people have ever been allowed to enter there, even out of working hours. I was one of the lucky few. An exciting experience, like going behind the scenes at a theatre. There the comparison ends and abruptly. For there is nothing in the least theatrical about that work-room; its atmosphere is completely scholastic. One side of the room is entirely taken up with books, and the author's desk is set facing the stimulus of those many volumes. The simple oak chair on which he sits and writes to-day is the same one which bore him through the labours of creating "Liza." One of his rare surrenders to sentiment.

Behind the desk is the window, with its view up the Cap Ferrat hill. The window itself is unique in that one side of it consists of a very beautiful picture of Gauguin's, a picture of a native girl painted on glass. And the history of how Somerset Maugham secured that picture is almost as remarkable as the work itself. On his travels he came to Tahiti where Gauguin lived for the last years of his life. In search of copy for a novel based on the history of that tragic genius, a novel which subsequently appeared under the title of "The Moon and Sixpence," Maugham discovered in a native hut where for a short time the painter had lived, this priceless panel used as a door. At once he offered to buy it, but its native owner was reluctant to part, not because he had any particular regard for it, but simply because he did not wish to lose his front door, and it was only when Somerset Maugham hit upon the idea of having another one built there and then in its place that he

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"A GLASS OF SHERRY IN THE STUDIO."

*A present-day portrait of Mr Somerset Maugham by Mr Gerald F Kelly, which, like the earlier one reproduced on page 588, is also exhibited in this year's Royal Academy.*

agreed to the exchange. One hears of masterpieces changing hands for the price of a song, but never before for that of a door.

Somerset Maugham only works in the mornings. He finds that that is sufficient time for him to complete his quota for the day of one thousand words. The rest of the day he spends in reading, gardening and sun-bathing, playing bridge and tennis. For both these games, especially tennis, he has a great love. He has a professional always in attendance to coach him, and his progress at the game means so much to him that often when he has opened his lips to speak and one has leant forward eagerly in the hope that he is about to make some significant and important pronouncement, he will disappoint the company with

Do you think I ought to throw the ball up higher when I serve?"

And yet, in another way, that kind of utterance is significant, for it shows what a simple person Somerset Maugham is at heart. A simplicity which is in keeping with his attitude towards life of complete and ruthless honesty. He has a passionate hatred of all shams and hypocrisies. He cannot forget the bitter struggle of his early years, and he is ever ready with sympathy and practical help for those who really need it. But he never speaks of such acts of kindness. He prefers to go on being the enigma of the literary world to the end

# JANE OF THE ROUGH TONGUE

By

## J. HASTINGS TURNER

*Illustrated by FRANK OLDHAM*

JANE was twelve years old and knew a great many things which there was no reason to suppose she had ever heard of. She had an oval impertinent face, with quick grey eyes which never seemed to be still for a moment, and a nose which was always turned towards the stars, even though her feet might be messing about in a puddle. Also she had one pig-tail, which she hated. She was supposed, in addition to possess a black bow to tie it at the bottom, but the hair-ribbon was invariably missing. She was also the most untidy child ever born. Though not strictly beautiful, she had charm. Her temper was sharp, a thing of quick gusts and immediate repentances. She was, too, incurably romantic. In moments of comparative inactivity she would sit dreamily and draw in a school sketching-book. Princesses were her specialty. They wore wonderful frocks, and small crowns a bit to one side, and they ran very long in the leg, with enormous feet.

At the moment she was being interviewed by her elder sister, Alice. The parents were abroad, on a long cruise, and Alice was in charge. Alice was a beauty. There was no question about that. It was generally acknowledged. She had real gold hair, not the lifeless annoying kind, but the genuine article. And she had a mouth which was rather an invitation than a mouth. Her eyes were a deep violet, but they didn't dance as much as Jane's. In fact, Alice could not honestly be called clever. At the moment she was regarding Jane with solemnity.

"Did I hear you say 'damn,' Jane?" she asked.

Jane tossed her nose a little further into the air.

"Yes," she said, sullenly.

"I'm surprised at you. What do you think mother would say if she knew?"

Jane, who was very fond of her mother, secretly considered this an unfair way of dealing with the thing.

"I heard *you* say damn," she hazarded, "when you knocked over the lamp last night!"

Alice looked at her severely.

"When you are twenty years old," she said, "you can make up your own mind about these things. It's horrid to hear a little girl like you saying 'damn'!"

"I don't see," began Jane mutinously, but Alice interrupted her.

"Well, you've *got* to see," she said sharply, "and, in order to jog your memory, you can stay at home this afternoon instead of going with Millet to North Reynesham!"

"Damn!" said Jane, simply.

"And I shall tell Mrs. Lovetter that you're to have nothing but bread and butter for your tea!"

"Hell!" said Jane.

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*"Look here, Jane," he said, nervously. "You didn't hear what I was saying, did you?"*

*"I never listen when people are being private," said Jane.*

'Are you defying me, Jane?" Alice was aware of a feeling of complete helplessness, if this should prove to be the case. She hadn't the least idea how to deal with a defiant Jane. Nor, to be fair, for the matter of that, had Jane's parents. She was relieved to hear Jane say, in an apologetic whisper, "It sort of slipped out!"

"I don't know where you pick up these things," said Alice.

"I heard you say 'hell,'" answered Jane, casually, without triumph or rancour, "that day when you were going to the Matlocks' dance, and the dressmaker."

"Will you hold your tongue?" snapped Alice. Really, the child was perfectly maddening. Jane held her tongue. After all, she had already been deprived of the treat of going to North Reynesham with Millet, the chauffeur, who had a weakness for her and sometimes let her drive the car; in addition to which, tea had become a definitely dull meal. It was, obviously, not worth while risking any further disaster.

Alice was distinctly relieved.

"Never let me hear you say either of those words again!" she said severely, and hurried out of the room in case Jane should think of a come-back. She herself was going riding with Roger Matlock but before starting, she did not forget to tell the cook that Miss Jane's tea was to be limited to bread and butter.

Jane sat down to consider the position. It was a lovely afternoon, not at all the kind of day designed for the drawing of princesses. She found herself devoid of ideas for her own entertainment. The chauffeur came in.

"I'm just starting, Miss Jane," he said. "When you're ready!"

"I mayn't come, Millet."

"Dear me, miss. I'm sorry to hear that!" He was, too. He found her an amusing companion.

"I said 'damn' you see," she explained.

He hardly knew what to reply to this frankness.

"I'm sorry to hear *that*," he repeated feebly.

"It's led to another bread-and-butter tea, too!" she went on.

"Very tiresome, miss," he said.

"Damnable, isn't it?" returned Jane. "Oh, Hell! I've said it again! *And* the other! I suppose I'm degenerate or something." She meant unregenerate, but the longer words always meant to her what she wanted them to mean.

Millet went off alone to North Reynesham, and Jane was left to make her own plans for the afternoon. She decided at once that it was a day for the open air. Having arrived at that conclusion, it was quite plain that any adventure in the woods must imply some sort of sustenance. She went round to the back door and was pleased to hear the voice of Mrs. Lovette in the kitchen garden, evidently having a row with the gardener. Things being thus, it seemed foolish and improvident not to slip into the larder.

She possessed herself of four rock-cakes, a wodge of coffee-icing off a delicacy designed for the drawing-room, and two hard-boiled eggs which had been destined for a salad. That settled in a very satisfactory way the question of the bread-and-butter tea. These things she secreted in a private corner of her own devising, in the wood-shed, and when Alice came down in her riding kit Jane was sulkily drawing a perfectly frightful princess. For a moment Alice's heart misgave her and she was on the point of relenting.

"You can have honey with your bread and butter, if you like it," she said.

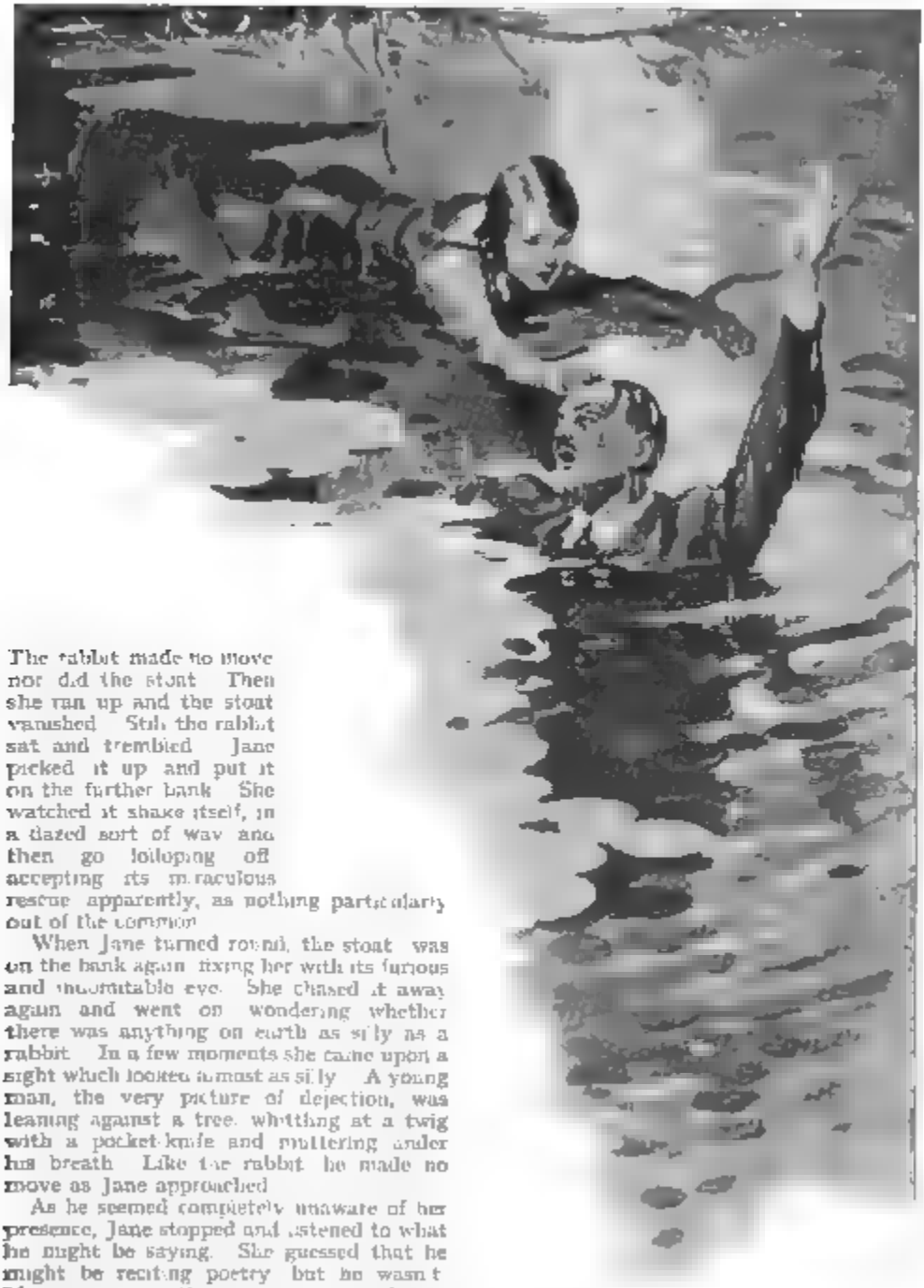
"Don't want any honey," replied Jane, without looking up.

"Oh, very well then," said her sister. "Don't have it!"

She went out, and a few minutes later Jane heard her horse jogging down the drive. She gave her a moment or two, because the way to the woods lay in the same direction, and it would be a pity if Alice should be deprived of the idea that she was spending an afternoon of martyrdom. Then she found a shopping-basket in the hall and made her way back to the wood-shed.

She had no idea what exactly she was going to do, but as it happened, Fate arranged this part of the business for her. As she wandered along towards the woods she bore no resentment towards Alice. These grown-up people had queer ideas, and the only thing one could do was to feel sorry for them. Perhaps, when *she* was grown-up she might contract the same disease herself. But she hoped not. Remembering not to do things seemed to take up such a terrible lot of one's time. Almost as much as trying to call to mind the innumerable things one was expected to do. In the wood one wasn't expected to do anything, or, at any rate, just exactly what one liked.

One was certainly not expected to behave. It was cool and mysterious among the trees. In the middle of a grassy riding she came upon a rabbit sitting quite quietly, with its ears thrown back. It made no attempt to move at her approach, and as she drew nearer she saw that it was trembling violently. From the bank at the side, there appeared the ugly, vicious head of a stoat. She picked up a stone and flung it at the beast



The rabbit made no move nor did the stoat. Then she ran up and the stoat vanished. Still the rabbit sat and trembled. Jane picked it up and put it on the further bank. She watched it shake itself, in a dazed sort of way and then go lolloping off accepting its miraculous rescue apparently, as nothing particularly out of the common.

When Jane turned round, the stoat was on the bank again fixing her with its furious and indomitable eye. She chased it away again and went on wondering whether there was anything on earth as silly as a rabbit. In a few moments she came upon a sight which looked almost as silly. A young man, the very picture of dejection, was leaning against a tree whittling at a twig with a pocket-knife and muttering under his breath. Like the rabbit he made no move as Jane approached.

As he seemed completely unaware of her presence, Jane stopped and listened to what he might be saying. She guessed that he might be reciting poetry but he wasn't. He was saying the most amazing things, using the same words over and over again. It struck Jane that, even during the short time she stood listening to him, he must have earned at least a year's bread and butter for tea. She could not see his face, for his

*He splashed towards her, and she got him by the hair. "Now for goodness' sake," said Jane, "don't panic."*

hat was pulled low down over his eyes but she thought, wonderfully interesting though it was, that the perfect lady could hardly go on listening for ever So she advanced and said very politely Would you like a rock-cake or an egg?

The young man seemed to shoot out of his dream as if someone had stuck a pin into him. He dropped his twig, and his hat fell off Then Jane saw that it was Martin Strong who was old Dr Tallant's partner and whom she liked very much because he never pretended for a moment that she wasn't grown-up "Dr Strong!" she said, Well, I never!"

BUT Dr Strong usually so very friendly appeared unaccountably upset at the meeting

Look here, Jane" he said, nervously "You didn't hear what I was saying, did you?"

I never listen, said Jane, "when people are being private!"

There was no point in upsetting the poor man, after all He seemed in a pretty poor way already

Quite right," he replied in a tone of relief "One never does that, does one? It was nice of you to offer me the choice of a rock-cake or an egg, but as a matter of fact, I'm not hungry"

I thought said Jane that you seemed rather miserable?"

"Not at all" answered the doctor

Jane looked at her toes

"Lying, she said, slowly, "is the worst thing of all That's what Daddy says but perhaps he's not right What do you think?

Martin Strong thought furiously

I agree with Daddy of course," he said at last

"I see" Jane spoke very softly and her eyes never left the ground The man shifted uneasily It is very troublesome to be caught out by a child, more especially if you happen to be the kind of person who doesn't particularly like telling lies

The fact is" he said, that there are some bothers that rock-cakes and eggs aren't much use for"

I see," said Jane, once more She was very curious to know what they might be but she rather thought that the general atmosphere made it unwise to ask

Where are you going to?" he said Let me carry your basket?

That's very good of you, she answered in her most grown-up style, and surrendered it He walked at her side, making conversation, but she hardly listened She was mad to find out what these bothers were upon which rock cakes had no effect Being a Romantic, she could only think of one And then a blinding light lit up her brain Of course Why had she never thought of that before? The very last time he had been to tea with them his hand had trembled and he had spilt the milk, when Alice had handed him the bread and butter with gentleman's relish on it. And Alice was a well-known beauty, and she had haughtily refused to listen to his suit That happened always in the books Jane read The haughtiness of the women was something fierce Only they were mostly princesses, and had a right to be haughty

It was too bad of Alice. To behave like a princess, and drive the poor man to stand under a tree, and use those amazing words But there was no question about it That was what must have happened For all she knew the woods were full of men to whom Alice had behaved haughtily and who were now standing under trees, past praying for I know what's the matter with you Dr Strong," she said, suddenly

I think not" he answered, with a grave smile

"What do you bet?" asked Jane

I'm not sure I want to bet about it, he replied. Hullo! There's a wood-cock" But it was absurd to try to change the subject like that, and besides it wasn't a wood-cock either which she knew that the doctor knew perfectly well Just when everything was on the verge of being so exciting

She had no intention of being put off

We won't bet if you don't want to then but you'll tell me if I'm right won't you?

The doctor nodded

Well," said Jane eagerly, I bet you're in this misery because Alice has gone out riding with Mr Matlock? Am I right?"

Martin Strong bit his lip Blast the child! With unerring skill she had driven him straight into another lie It was really too bad And she was such a nice child, too! You couldn't possibly tell her to run away and not to be impertinent Not only because she was a nice child, but because the wretched little brat had brains as well, and if you said that she would know at once that she had scored a bull's-eye! Nothing for it but another lie

Don't be silly!" he said and tried to persuade himself that it was only half a denial She looked demurely upon the ground

I'm sorry," she said, if I was wrong, or if you think I have been impertinent I oughtn't to have jumped to profusions. I suppose But I expect you will forgive me. After all I'm only a woman!"

In moments of grandeur Jane always quoted the last book she had been reading The doctor strongly suspected that he had not got away with it but cross-examination was out of the question

Thank you for carrying my basket said Jane, and held out her hand for it He surrendered the basket and said gravely

Thank you for allowing me to carry it "

Jane said, Not at all! " And on those terms they parted She to pursue her original objective, he to go back to his house wondering how much of his story the infernal kid had believed, and if as little as he suspected, how much her eager mind was going to repeat to her sister

JANE'S objective, needless to say was another secret place of her own There was, in the middle of the wood what they called The Lake," though it was really only a very large and very deep pond How deep it was, no one knew nor did anyone know how exactly it could ever have got there But there it was, far down below steep banks which started in thick undergrowth and ended in sand cliffs And, in her wanderings, Jane had discovered that half-way down the sandy part there was a tiny cave Naturally it had become her own kingdom With the intuition of the young, which is very like that of the animals she realized that here she was comparatively safe First one had to find the gap in the briars up above, and then, after taking, very accurately, the right line, one had to slide down the sand on one's knickerbockers If the whole thing came off according to plan one bumped neatly into the cave. If it didn't, one slid at great speed into the water

But Jane knew the exact direction of that slide as a trapper knows his traps, and she knew, also, that grown-ups had an absurd but absolutely firm conviction that to slide on one's knickerbockers was a disgrace and a disaster Alice, she was certain, would rather die than slide upon her knickerbockers. It seemed a pity, and rather silly but there it was, and at least it had the virtue of making the cave a really utterly private place Jane negotiated the gap in the briars, took her bearings and, basket in hand, dropped, without a sound, into her cave

When she had eaten all the rock-cakes and both the eggs, she felt that she could hardly face the coffee-icing But she didn't like to feel that she had funked it, so she put it all in at once, and gave a great swallow Then she lay back in the cave and began to think of a story a story full of princesses who were all exactly like Alice and of miserable commoners, like Dr Strong who had suffered from haughtiness. She became sleepy, and for some time, she slept

Then she woke up, and was very sick. Being properly brought up, she did it well over the side and the dark waters below swallowed up her indiscretion to the manner born. A friendly thing, water

Jane felt rather nice after this She lay back in the friendly sand of her cave, and went to sleep again She dreamt of the most marvellous stories in the world—King Cophetua and his beggar-maid Laura and her Petrarch—all the things that she had read, and that had bitten into her young brain as the things that really mattered They were very lovely dreams which might have gone on for ever but they were never a great success at home. It just simply seemed that that kind of thing wasn't wanted. It was very nice, in the cave, all the same

Sun-warmed sand, she thought, was the nearest approach to Heaven that this life provided. She was glad she had been sick If it had happened at home, it would have been rather hard to explain after a bread-and-butter tea Everything had really turned out very satisfactorily to-day, in spite of a bad start Oh, Lord, what was that? Someone had shouted from above a sort of frightened shout and now a whole lot of sand poured over the entrance of the cave, like rain and something heavy shot past still crying out, in a strangled kind of way—and then there was the most enormous splash It sounded like an elephant but Jane was practically certain that there were no elephants in the wood She peered, cautiously over the edge of the cave Something was beating on the water and gasping, and making queer, frightened noises. It wasn't an elephant. It was a man

The sight of him, splashing about down there amused Jane considerably He *did* look silly And why on earth did he go splashing further out into the pond, instead of coming to the side? He didn't want to go swimming, with all his clothes on surely? No. It was quite clear that he didn't want to go swimming, because he was making strange sobbing sounds in his throat Then suddenly, he disappeared under the water, with only one hand showing And that hand clutched feebly at nothing Jane said to herself, Good Lord, the poor idiot *can't* swim! " Being a Girl Guide she knew that she would have to do something about it She shouted

Don't do that! Lie on your back! "

But, besides not being able to swim he seemed to be an absolute ass. He just floundered about and got further and further

out into the deep water Jane slid down on her knickerbockers, using her hands most expertly as a brake, to the edge of the water The man had gone down again. his hands clawing at the water Jane screamed "You silly idiot keep still! I'll get you out. Oh, you are a hopeless, frightful man aren't you?"

There was a big branch of a tree floating about five yards away from the bank Jane flopped into the water, and swam to it. "That's ruined this frock!" she said to herself, "and that will mean bread and butter for ever!"

She crept along the log, which *would* keep on turning over, until she got to the end. from where it was possible to reach the idiot's hand The idiot was exhausted and terrified. and he was making whimpering noises that seemed to Jane indecent. She leant far out and put her small hand on his wrist The fingers wouldn't get round it, but the touch seemed to give him an extra bit of courage He splashed towards her and she got him by the hair The log swayed slowly towards him, and he gripped it despairingly

"Now for goodness sake," said Jane. "hang on. and don't panic"

It was then that she saw for the first time, who the man was. He was Roger Matlock She never *had* thought much of Roger Matlock and now she thought less than ever. A grown-up man who fell into the water, and couldn't swim Hopeless

"Hang on to that log," she said, sharply, "and don't panic"

He hung on to the log. gasping foolishly Jane manœuvred her way to the bank end, and, still holding the end of the trunk succeeded in scrambling on to the bank itself. It was hard to keep her grip on the thing, but very slowly it began to swing round and come in. The man scrambled on to the sliding sand, and lay on his back panting. Jane could see his eyes, staring down into the water They still held the last glint of a horrible fear A child is not used to seeing fear in a grown-up, and Jane found it vaguely unattractive. At last, more or less recovered, he started to talk very fast, making light of the whole affair She listened to him in silence. When he had come to the end of what he wanted to say, she just nodded

"If you crawl up the bank after me," she said, "I'll show you the gap in the briars." And he crawled up after her Once on the top, out of sight of that horrible water he recovered himself and started to patronize her

He said "Jolly good little effort of yours, Jane! Not at all sure after the shock

*She dripped her way into the drawing-room. There she saw Alice lying back on the sofa, with Dr Strong kneeling at her side, his hand on her wrist.*

of the fall and all that, that I'd have got out without you."

Jane regarded him with the steady and disconcerting stare of a child. In all matters not concerned with immediate personal disaster she had an essentially honest mind.

"You ought to have learnt to swim," she said bluntly. "I've never heard of a man who didn't know how to swim!"

He flushed and looked angry, but pulled himself together. After all, he was only dealing with a child.

"When you suddenly fall into the water," he began, but she interrupted him.

"I've suddenly fallen into practically everything," she said, "but I've always swum!" She struck him as the most unpleasant type of child, the kind of infant who said things that there was, of course, a perfectly obvious answer to, but to which the answer for some maddening reason or other wouldn't come. And to try to be dignified with the water running down your trousers, and your collar like a boiled flat fish, was out of the question. "I think," he said, in an infinitely patronizing way, "that we had better go home, don't you?"

Jane just went on staring at him. Had he been capable of reading the signs, he would have seen in her grey eyes a sort of contemptuous pity. But he wasn't the kind of grown-up who realized that it was not beyond the bounds of possibility that a child might put him down for a count. Jane still said nothing, and Roger Matlock had nothing to say. He fell back on his authority as a grown-up.

"You'd better get back and get out of your wet clothes," he said.

Jane stared at him heavily.

"You're an awful, man, aren't you?" she said. He didn't wait for any more. He muttered something or other which she didn't catch, then turned his back and vanished into the woods.

Jane sat and regarded a ruined frock. That to her, was the real crux of the afternoon's adventure. Everything was just soaked through, right away to the combinations. Alice would be simply furious. She put a rather hopeless hand behind to her pig-tail. The bow was gone, of course. Oh well—the thing had got to be faced. No use telling the truth, because a man who fell into a pond, and couldn't swim, would never back you up.

It would probably end in a terrific lecture about lying, and a prolonged and tiresome punishment. Never mind. It had been a good and exciting afternoon, and it was worth facing the inevitable row with Alice. Jane started to walk back towards the house, and then she began to run, because she was cold.

BUT the adventures of that particular day were not destined to end at the pond in the wood. As she ran into the hall and dripped on to the Turkey carpet she became aware of strange noises which appeared to come from the drawing-room. She stopped dead, and continued to drip, still as a statue. A voice she did not recognize, high-pitched and unreal, was crying. "No—no! It is no good talking. I did it! I did it!" And then another voice, which she *did* recognize, answered calmly and quietly. It said: "Listen. I don't think that you really remember what it was that happened. Just be still, and I'll give you something that will steady those nerves. That's better—it's only a little prick like a needle—so——"

Then followed a stifled sob, and, after that real crying, but—as it seemed to Jane—proper crying, not the frightening sort. And then the parlourmaid came into the hall, and rushed at Jane, and said that she would catch her death, but Jane knew that she was not really bothering about whether she would catch her death or not at all, but was absurdly anxious that she should not go into the drawing-room. So Jane said at once that she was going into the drawing-room. After all, hemmed in though she might be in most directions, the parlour-maid had no possible jurisdiction over her. And so she dripped her way into the drawing-room.

There she saw Alice lying back on the sofa in her riding-habit, with Dr. Strong kneeling at her side, his hand on her wrist. It would have been nice to think that this was a picture of the repentant princess who had at last given up being haughty. But the face of the princess was so very white, and that of the suitor who held her hand so very grave, that it seemed unlikely that this was the explanation of the picture. In fact, as she stood there, wringing out her blue serge skirt on to father's best rug, Jane felt suddenly frightened. Martin Strong looked up and twisted his face into the best thing he could do towards a reassuring smile. It was not a very big success. He said:

"Jane, dear, you're terribly wet, and you ought to go and change at once, don't you think?"

As usual, he treated her as an equal. Other people would have said: "Go straight upstairs at once, and take off those filthy things." He didn't. It was good to know that she had been right in her judgment of him—that he really was a man upon whom one could rely. When she had come across him in the wood, making those funny noises under his hat, she had begun to wonder whether she might not possibly have been wrong. She was quite prepared

to obey him, but not before she knew what had happened to her sister. It was true that Alice had condemned her to bread and butter; but, after all, she had defeated Alice on that point—and even if she had not, you didn't want people to die just because they couldn't see eye to eye with you on a question of vocabulary, and Alice looked awfully like Jane's idea of someone who was dying. She suddenly discovered that she loved Alice, and that she didn't want her to die at all.

"Is she very, very ill?" asked Jane.

"Run upstairs and change, and come down again," said the doctor.

And then, with a voice which seemed to come from a long way off, Alice spoke.

"I never meant—I never meant——" Her voice died away and then came back again.

"We went into the wood. He—he had always been—been troublesome—do you know what I mean?"

Martin Strong had his eye on Jane.

"Quiet," he said. "Just be quiet."

"But, of course I know what she means," said Jane. "What she means is that he wanted to kiss her?"

The doctor's voice became suddenly unusually harsh.

"Will you please run away, Jane?" he asked. Jane was a little annoyed with him. In the past he could always have been relied upon not to say things like that. But her annoyance vanished and became real alarm, as she heard Alice suddenly begin to scream shrilly.

"I did it! I did it!" she cried. "He put his arms round me and I pushed him. I heard him cry as he went over the edge, and I heard the splash. He couldn't swim. He always pretended that he could, but I know that he couldn't!" Her voice went quavering away into a horrible high-pitched sort of groan, and Jane's face became very white. How was she to know that this was the merciful drug taking effect at last?

Dr. Strong came across the room to her and put a hand on her shoulder.

"It's all right, my dear," he said. "It's perfectly all right. I wouldn't tell you that if it wasn't. Go and change those wet clothes."

But Jane made no move. Her small but very efficient brain was doing overtime.

"But—but," she said, "it's all about nothing. Of course the idiot fell in, and, of course he couldn't swim. What else would you expect of a soppy kind of man like that? But I pulled him out. That's why I'm all wet. And he's gone home to make up some kind of awful lie about it!" He's a frightful man, and I can't understand how Alice could possibly be haughty to you!"

It may have been that the doctor's face went suddenly red because of anxiety for his patient. At any rate, it *did* go suddenly red. Then he did a most peculiar and unprofessional thing. He took the dripping Jane into his arms and hugged her.

"Go and change, you angel," he said. "Go and change, or I'll have to be giving you medicine soon! You've pulled your sister out of a bad mess, and I, for one, am damned proud of you."

He apologized instantly for the word.

"Aren't things unfair?" said Jane. "I had to have bread and butter for tea, this afternoon, for saying that!"

"But what about the rock-cakes and buns," asked the doctor wickedly.

"I think," replied Jane with dignity, "that, if I don't go and change now, I might quite possibly get a chill?"

"I think," agreed the doctor gravely, "that quite possibly, you might."

WHEN Jane came down again dried and complete, except for the hair-ribbon which was still floating about somewhere or other in the pond in the wood, she forgot to knock at the door.

What she saw, when she came in, was enough to satisfy even her ideas of romance. The doctor was kneeling beside his patient, with his face much closer to hers than could possibly have been necessary. And it seemed to Jane that they were both talking at once. Alice was saying, "You darling, you darling—of course I always—always, but you never spoke, did you?"

"I didn't dare," he said.

"And Jane—Jane—When you think that I punished Jane——" And then came the tears.

It seemed to Jane that the moment had come to interfere. The situation was obviously becoming soppy, a state of affairs not tolerated among Girl Guides.

"I must say, Alice," she said, "I'm glad you've chosen the right man. It would have been a frightful thing to marry a man who couldn't swim. Damnable!"

She became aware that she had used the forbidden word again. But no rebuke came. Rather the contrary.

# THE FLAG AND THE FLAPPER

By

## LYNN DOYLE

*Illustrated by* ILLINGWORTH

IF I was the king of the whole world, said Mr Patrick Murphy, I would do away with all bands, flags, processions, an' party tunes. All over the earth people differs about politics an' religion but things goes on brave an' peaceful so long as they don't wave flags an' play tunes about them.

An' if I was bate as far as the whole world was concerned I'd try to carry a law again such things in Ireland at any rate, an' failin' that I'd pass it by hook or crook for the town of Ballygullion. For although we're just about half-an'-half, Nationalist an' Orange—the wickedest mixture you could have—we can live side by side friendly enough till both of us begin to make ready for the party processions in the summer time. But from the first blatter on an Orange drum comin' up to the Twelfth of July till-well' an' bitterness sets in like the flowing tide an' only ebbs with the last walop of a Nationalist drumstick on the night of the fifteenth of August.

I suppose it's twenty or twenty-five years ago since things got so bad between the breakin' of heads an' the smashin' of windows, that the ratepayers of the town to save themselves from bein' clean broke with claims for malicious injury met the Bench of Magistrates an' divided Ballygullion into two halves, Orange an' Green an' then came to an agreement with the police. After that date an' Orange or a Nationalist band might march right up to the boundary line in full blast—though they'd be wiser not to—but if an Orangeman as much as tootled one semi-quaver on a flute in the Nationalist quarter, or the other way about, the police had full authority to make scrap of every head or instrument that they could reach with a baton.

The arrangement worked well. Now an' then when the bottled-stout was in better order than usual one band or another would march up to the dividin' line an' play "The Protestant Boys" or "St. Patrick's Day" a little extra entirin' an' there'd be a few stones thrown—but eighteen-pence worth of stickin'-plaster would have doctored the worst row of the kind that I can remember.

In other ways, too, the new plan worked. People likes to be in the company of their own sort on earth however things may work out in heaven later on. A good deal of movin' begun to take place—until, while there'd be a wee island of Protestants among the Catholics here an' there, an' a stray family or two of Catholics left among the Protestants, in the end the division for party processions an' for religions came to be nearly the same thing.

It would have been better maybe, if it had been the same altogether—for where there's neighbour boys an' girls there'll be courtin' an' where there's courtin' there'll be marryin'—an' mixed marryin's good for neither side, here or hereafter.

Even at the very best it's a thorny business, an' I seen that at first-hand—for I was terrible friendly with the Rice's of

Gordon's Lane, an' though they were as lovin a couple as you'd wish to meet on three hundred an' sixty-four days in the year I've knowed Willie Rice havin to sleep in his own furniture-shop on the night of the Twelfth of July

I will say however that in general there was fair give an' take between the pair Willie was the Orange half of the partnership, an' seein that their only child Moira, was bein brought up a Catholic, Mrs. Rice, to compensate her man, gave in to the family livin' in Gordon's Lane well over the boundary of the Protestant quarter

It was a real trial to her, too for Willie Rice was the only Protestant she ever thought much of, an' Moira seemed to be growin up a good deal broader-minded than her ma, as far as the young man side of things went, an odd times, wasn't above givin King William's end of the house the dazzle of a very entecin blue eye For all that, I had never seen or heard of her showin favour to anybody in particular an so I was the more surprised when I got a note one afternoon from Mrs Rice askin me to call in with her the first day possible

*"That'll do now, Pat," sez she. "What harm did mixed marryin' do my father an' mother?"*

Moira looks like goin the way her mother did the letter finished up. an you have more influence with her than most people

An so I had, for, though I m an ould fellow now, I never forget that I was young once an the girls knows when they have a friend, an would tell me a deal more than they d let out to a sensibler man

It s queer I didn't hear about this Mrs. Rice, sez I when I went into the kitchen

I didn t know it myself, ' sez she till I saw a bit-head on the kitchen table yesterday an begun to wonder why we were goin so far afield for our groceries Then I made inquiries It's Frank Cromie wee Jimmie the grocer s son '

Frank Cromie ? ' sez I ' A bitter Orangeman like him Now if it was Jimmie himself He s broad-minded, if you like

I may tell you that Jimmie Cromie had inherited from his uncle some ten years before a grocer s shop about as far into the Nationalist quarter as Gordon s Lane was into the Protestant quarter an if you could imagine a weather-cock showin' the wind blowin from North, South, East an West at the same time an in the end leavin people puzzled whether there was any wind at all, you have Jimmie, as far as religion an politics went

Don t be makin a joke of the thing,' sez Mrs. Rice lookin very miserable. It's Frank an' it's serious He's not comin here for furniture, mind she s goin' there for groceries

There s a difference sure enough, sez I scratchin my chin Have you said anythin to her, yet ? '

About mixed marriages, I did,' sez she not about Frank I wouldn t be so big a fool as to do *that*. She ll be home in a minit Do you have a word with her on the same lines, an' I ll *shift* out of the way while you re doin it '

But Moira stopped me right at the start

That I do now Pat sez she, wrinklin up her straight wee nose at me " What harm did mixed marryin do my father an mother ?

Well for one thing sez I, ' they brought a daughter into the world that doesn t take mixed marryin half as serious as she ought to. An', mind you, Moira, if you marry Frank you won't find him as easy-goin about religion an politics as your father

I ll give in that I got one or two kisses from him with a purty strong Orange flavour on them, ' sez she just to plague me, the wee divil – but sure I always chew a shamrock afterwards I know I m not doin the right thing, ' sez she, changin' to serious all at once. an I know its vexin my mother but och, Pat I like him, I just *like* him.

"SHE'S not as feather-headed as she makes out. I know that. sez I to her mother but there s no doin anythin with her if she goes on fancyin Frank

Could you set Frank's father against the match ? sez Mrs. Rice. My man won t interfere one way or another an' how can I blame him ? He fell out with his father over marryin *me*

I could do nothin with Jimmie at this time of the year ' sez I. " All he thinks of in his ordinary state is grabbin his pence He'd turn Hindoo for the sake of a tin of sardines. But comin' up to the Twelfth of July he gets more bigoted a bit

I couldn t hold out till the Twelfth sez Mrs. Rice My heart's in my mouth every time I see her goin in the direction of Cromie's shop

' Listen ! Mrs Rice, ' sez I, jumpin up as the thought took me ' The widow Hennessey's son is bein priested in May an' goin out to the South Seas Mission There hasn t been a priest ordained in Ballygullion for years, more shame for us an our end of the town ll be flagged as it never was in my time before. besides illuminations an a procession to see him off That'll raise more bitterness nor even the Twelfth of July, for, after all King William can convert nobody now I'll begin to deal again with Jimmie Cromie a week or two before the ordination, an if I don't get a chance to put a spoke in Frank s wheel it ll be a quare thing.

Sure enough when May come round there was such a flyin of flags as never had been in Ballygullion before every shape an size an every sort an kind that could be made out to have any connexion with religion or even politics for about Ballygullion like many another place in the North, the two is very often kept in the same box. an sometimes gets mixed The bulk was the Papal colours, white an yellow there was a few harps without the crown, an a tune of the flute deep in the Nationalist quarter, there was even an odd Free State tricolour

By the time the town was well flagged I d been buyin stuff from Jimmie Cromie above a fortnight an I thought the minit was about ripe for a word or two with him over mixed marriages. For one thing religious bitterness had been risin with every square foot of buntin' an, for another, Moira an Frank had been latterly courtin most outrageous

You surely don t mean," broke in Jimmie on me, before I'd got very far,

" that your side are as much again mixed marriages as they let on to be ? '

That's just what I do mean," sez I " but—not to be offensive—I doubt whether it would increase peace and harmony if I was to explain why '

Oh that's all right, Mr Murphy " breaks in Jimmy again " I'm very particular about my own beliefs but at the present minit it's the grocery trade I'm thinkin about an I want to please the majority

Look here he bursts out after takin a cautious skelly round the shop, you were a good customer of mine in the old shop, an now you've been kind enough to follow me here, an' you were always a wise, close-tongued man an your money as sure as the cock crowin—I daren't speak to one of my own, an I must speak to somebody It's this d—d flag business My heart's clean broke to know what to put out '

What d you put out a flag for ? sez I Sure it's not your side '

That's all very well,' sez Jimmie, but look at the groceries I sell among your people Why man, I get rid of as much dried fish an tinned herrin's among the Catholic working-class alone as pays my rent an rates An some of them are at me already to know when my flag's goin up.

' Well, put up a flag them,' sez I Somethin' betwixt an between, that'll offend nobody

" Betwixt an between ! ' sez Jimmie a bit vexed I wonder at you, Mr Murphy Sure there's no betwixt an' between in this town except with the like of me that makes my livin' by it I suppose it's true enough when I come to think of it, that some of your people wouldn't be pleased if there was word of our Frank marryin' Mary Rice—I tell you what, Pat, sez he I'll wait till comin up to the time of the procession just to let people see that I'm no bigot anyway, an' then I'll work on Frank to give her up I'm near sure I could manage it He's fond of Moira but away at the back of his head he's suspicious that she's stronger on your side than she lets on to be

It's not a bad notion, Mr Cromie, sez I " An' I have one for you about your other trouble There's a big Free State flag up at my house that my cousin Joe blast him—wanted to hoist opposite the Orange Hall an' I stole off him to save his life I'll send it to you after dark—"

I daren't for my life hang that out," puts in Jimmie all scared I'm too near the Orange quarter '

Don't hang it out,' sez I That's the idea. Keep it in the shop here, an if any strong politician of our side comes in, fetch him over to see it on the quiet, an' say you meant to put it out but the Ulster Government wouldn't let you '

'An a great notion, too ! " sez Jimmie, in high feather I did want to do somethin in the flag line, that's the truth O'Loughlin on the opposition has been cuttin into me, an, troth no wonder, for his shop-front is like a Regatta Come back in a few days, an I'll tell you how it works. '

SO back I went in two days' time, makin' a call meantime with Mrs. Rice that left her in better heart, an when I entered the shop I could see that Jimmie was still worried

" That flag notion of yours was a bauchle, sez he. " I tried it on young Fitzmaurice, the Republican, hopin to sell him half a ham an' he near devoured me. He said the yellow end on that tricolour flag of yours should be orange, an not yellow an' that it was nothin but a Cosgrave rag as it stood an showed up the yellow streak in Willie Cosgrave an his crowd of time-servers an' West Britons. The tricolour of Ireland sez he, is green-an-white, an' orange to show that it stands for the freedom of every class an creed an' party in this island, an' if you dare to put out that dishcloth, ye little Orange pup,' sez he, I'll cut the lights out of you ! ' However Jimmie ends up. " I hear Fitzmaurice was arrested last night for pullin' down Corporal Mahood's Union Jack, an' by the time he's out of jail even the Twelfth of July will be over thank God '

' I'm real sorry I got you into trouble " I was beginnin' when Jimmie interrupted me

Not a word now,' sez he. You meant well. An what I lost over you on the pickles I'll make up on the sauce I turned that notion of yours about a neutral flag over an over in my mind, an then I had an idea, an I wrote to my brother, the retired sea-captain, in Belfast. He's been over the world an has flags galore so I asked him to send me somethin that nobody would recognize an' man, he's done it Come into the store Well ? " sez he, shakin' out a big flag. what do you make of it ? '

I looked at it for a minit or two, an shook my head

Does it belong to the earth at all ? " sez I " I see the new moon in the corner An what kind of language is on it ? I never seen writin' like that in my life before."

I don't know, myself, sez Jimmie. My youngest boy Sammy the fellow that's goin on for the Boy Clerks, thinks it's Pitman's shorthand

*Round the corner, in a spring-cart, comes Higgins, the fowl-man from Belfast, an' in a minute his head was among the folds of the flag*

... there's not an offensive about the ... pole," sez I.

"What's that?" sez Jimmie, his jaw droppin'. "It doesn't matter what's on it," sez he, recoverin', "about the Pope or King William. Sammy says if it's in shorthand nobody but newspaper men could read it an' the religion's far back in them, anyway. Now, the flag'll offend nobody on one side or the other," sez Jimmie, "because

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nobody h know anythin about it. Lend me a hand an we ll put it out of the first-floor window

'All right," I answered him. "But I hope it s for your good, for I never seen a flag yet that didn t offend somebody"

It was a true word. We weren t right back in the shop, an' me chewin away at a handfu' of peppermint lozengers that Jimmie had give me for my trouble, when the door flings open with a bang an' in bounces ex-corporal Mahood of the Royal Lecale Rifles, ' as he always called himself in full, an' the eyes was dancin in his head in a way I didn t altogether like I put two hundredweight of lump sugar between me an' him as quick as I could, but he paid no attention to me but strode up to wee Jimmie an shook his fist in his face

' What the '—no matter what— do you mean, you little hypocrite an' heksplttie, ' he stutters, ' by flyin the flag of bloody Turks an' heathen in this British town ? Listen, sez he. ' I ve lived under that flag for eighteen months, a miserable thirsty prisoner. I ve ate sand, an' flies, an grasshoppers, an dogs, an things a dog wouldn't eat I've been prodded with bayonets, an' beat with sticks, an kicked— ay, by heavens, by niggers in their bare feet—an' daren t even girn at them I've had sunstroke, too,' he fair yells, don't forget that, for the brains is boilin in my head this very minit. Take down that rag this morta minit, sez he, clutchin' in the air with his fingers about three inches in front of Jimmie s face, " or by the holy fiddler I'll leave you lookin' as if you had been sliced up for marmalade.'

When we were rid of the corporal an' had the flag parcelled up again, Jimmie threw his cap on the floor of the shop , n'

then lashed it up among the soap an candles.

'To hell with all flags an' them that invented them, sez he. I'll soon be in the lunatic asylum, where everybody but the warders has too much sense to bother about flags. What am I to do at all? If I put out a flag you see what happens to me an' if I don't, Lord knows what'll happen to me. My trade's meltin like a soft sweet in a window-bottle. All's left for me is to encourage Frank to walk about this part of the town with Moira on his arm. If it offends some it'll please some an as things are now they're all gettin offended. But I wish I was keepin' shop in the moon.'

'You're foolish about Frank,' sez I. 'He'll marry her an at the bottom of your heart you'll be sorry.'

'He won't,' sez Jimmie. 'All this flag-flappin is stiffenin' him up a good deal on the Orange side, an unless Moira gives way to him all along the line a word from me'll break the whole thing like sugar-stick.'

But when I told Mrs. Roe this, on my way home, she only shook her head.

'She *will* give way to him,' sez she. 'I can see that. The stiffer he's gettin about religion an politics—an he's gettin stiffer about both every day—the more she's givin' in. Why, only this very mornin she took out of her breast the wee shamrock brooch she's so fond of wearin an' all because it might offend her darlin Frank. Oh, dear, dear,' sez Mrs. Roe beginnin to cry. 'I'll live to see my only child married at a Registry Office, an' my grandchildren wearin Orange-sashes.'

As for Moira she just shook her yellow curls at me till you'd think they would jingle like bells, an' ran away.

'I like him. I like him, I *like* him,' sez she pausin on her step. 'There's too many flags in his system. I know, but, sooner or later, I'll pour the them out with these.'

She held out her two white arms to me an' then off with her before I could answer.

But it was flags that settled it all in the end, though not in the way I or anybody else could have thought of.

Time wore on, an the day of the religious service an the big excursion to Belfast arrived. I didn't mean to go near Jimmie Cromie's on my road to the church, for I was sorry for both Moira an Frank an hadn't the heart for a joke. But in the middle of shavin myself a message come to me from Jimmie askin me, if I could at all manage it, to call round his way as I was goin. When I went into the shop he was in a lamentable sputter.

'Mr. Murphy,' sez he, near cryin, 'what am I to do at all, at all? The procession has been changed by orders of the police, an' it's to go past my shop now. An word has come to me by a good friend—he owes me a tidy bit of money an I can depend on him—that if I have nothin in the way of decoration out when the procession passes I may as well shut shop as far as the Catholics of this town are concerned.

'It's an unlucky change for you the grocery, sez I, an I meant it. 'I should try to get out a bit of huntin some kind or another. Look here,' sez I after turnin' the whole situation over in my mind—for troth I thought a pity the wee creature—'I'll tell you what. Put out one of our flags—any one you can get—just before the procession starts an pull it down when the tail of the procession is past you. There'll be no Protestants about you may swear that, an if there's a rumour about you goes round afterwards you haven't been in business for twenty years without knowin' how to put a straight face on a crooked story. Now do what I tell you,' sez I, 'an settin aside your trade altogether there mightn't be a window left in your house.'

But I have nothin to put up,' sez he, wringin his hands. 'An' you couldn't buy a flag of your side now with diamonds.'

Put up the Free State flag I lent you,' sez I. 'You'll have to put up somethin now, I tell you, an if you're goin to please our side please us, properly. O'Loughlin has been time-servin' a bit himself with those wee three-cornered boat-race flags instead of the real thing, an if you shove up the tricolour you'll wipe him out of the provision trade.'

Wee Jimmie looked at me, an his eyes were sparklin.

'Hell to him!' sez he. 'He sent up to borrow two boxes of kippered herrin last Thursday night just to rub my misfortunes into me. Dammie I'll do it. You'll be back shortly with the procession, Mr. Murphy. Maybe you'd help me to get the flag down quick.'

But I have remnants of discretion sometimes. When the service was over I made my way quietly across to Mrs. Roe's an only heard the beginnin' of the proceedin's at second-hand.

At ten o'clock the procession was to set out for the station. At a quarter to ten Jimmie Cromie put the Free State flag on a pole out of his drawin-room window on the first floor, after sendin Frank a message of a mile or so beyond the far side of the town to get him out of the way, an' at ten minutes to ten the sergeant of the police came into Jimmie's shop.

*He leapt up the two steps, seized the Union Jack in Maira's breast, an' tore it away "You two-faced little hypocrite!" he grinds out "I'm done with you."*

"Your flag is hangin' at least a foot an' a half too low," sez he. "It'll interfere with the procession. Take it down at once."

"Now, sergeant," sez Jimmie, makin' a mistake. "I'm well aware you like the flag no more than I do; but give fair play. I must live. An' you know well it wouldn't touch the head of the giant in a circus."

"Oh, very good," sez the sergeant, takin' out his note-book. "If you want to be summoned, first for obstructin' the traffic an' secondly for provokin' a breach of the peace—I may tell you I'll oppose the option of a fine."

All right, all right," sez Jimmie, fair ragin'. "I'll take it down. But you might as well say my shirt on a clothes-line would cause a breach of the peace, or obstruct the traffic, either."

He was wrong. Just as he had eased the butt of the pole, an' lowered the flag a couple of feet or so, round the corner in his spring-cart comes Higgins, the fowl-man from Belfast, an' in a minit his head was among the folds. He grabbed the cloth with his free hand. The spring-cart went on. Higgins overbalanced but stuck his hold. There was a rip an' a tear. The next minit Higgins was on his mouth an' nose on the sidewalk with the cloth part of the flag on top of him, an' while he was tryin' to fight his way out of it there come a yell of rage as the procession turned the corner, an' the whole pack of young fellows that was walkin' in front of the band came roarin' vengeance down the street.

Now I can't tell what religion Higgins was, but he knowed there wouldn't be a long inquiry held after the crowd reached him, an' he took to his heels for the boundary line between the two parties, an' I all mixed up in the flag. He won by yards, but if he did it was out of the fryin'-pan into the fire. As he tore up the Orange quarter, with the flag by this time flutterin' clear out behind him, there riz a still wickeder yell than before from the far end of the street where a few lads of the Orange side had been prisin' up pavin'-stones in the street in case, as they explained later, the procession might attack them on the way home.

Poor Higgins was near at his last gasp, but there was venom in the sound. I was standin' with Mrs. Rice at the door of her house as he shot round the corner into my arms.

"'Save me!'" sez he—that was all. But I seen the flag, an' that was enough.

"In with you," sez I, an' I pushed him into the house. "Now, out by the kitchen an' over the wall. Your *flag*, you fool!" I shouts. But he was away, an' the flag lyin' on the kitchen floor.

"Hide it, quick!" I splutters to Mrs. Rice. "They're followin' him, an' if they find it here they'll pull the house down."

"Where—where?" sez Mrs. Rice, standin' all bewildered in the middle of the kitchen with the flag in her arms.

"Give me it," sez Moira. "I know a place."

She tore the flag from her mother as fair flew up the stairs, an' I knowed well she was thinkin' more of Frank than of the crowd.

THE next minit I heard a wee paper-boy's voice from the street. "Willie Rice's—he run into Willie Rice's house," an' the next minit a dozen or so young fellows were in the hall.

You couldn't describe it. They shouted an' shook their fists in my face, an' told me some things I was an' a good many I wasn't, an' I argued an' contradicted, an' Mrs. Rice screamed an' cried, but though I staved off any damage for the minit they would not be persuaded that we were innocent till they would search the house. I could see Moira peerin' round the bend of the stairs, an' when she heard that she stepped down into the hall quite cool an' smilin'.

"Two or three of you come up with me," sez she, "an' see for yourselves."

She looked very sweet an' takin', with her yellow curls an' a wee flush on her cheeks from the run up the stairs. After all, a good-lookin' girl is of no party. The lads looked at one another a bit shame-faced. I could see the trouble was as good as over when all at once Frank Cromie pushed his way in. I heard afterwards he had took the notion to call an' see Moira on his way back.

"What's this?" he sez, very fierce. "What are you boys doin' here?"

"It's all right, Frank," speaks up Moira. "They thought I was puttin' up the tri-colour, but they find they're mistaken."

She looked at Frank, an' there was a little Union Jack in his buttonhole. Whether it was to end the row or whether it was just to please her man I never asked her, but she took the wee flag out of Frank's breast an' pinned it in her own.

"I want no tricolour nor any other flag," sez she, lookin' up at Frank very sweet. "This will do me."

There riz a mutter of a cheer from the lads, an' one by one they slipped away like lambs. Moira walked up a step or two of the stairs, then turned round an' made a kind of old-fashioned courtesy to Frank. I can still see the picture her face made with her two lips half-open an' her eyes all soft an' tender.

Yes, Frank," she sez, " it s my flag if you wish it '

" Oh, fare ye well ," sez I to myself " The ou cause is lost this time. '

Ah at once Frank stiffened up an let an oath out of him The next minit he lept up the two steps, seized the Union Jack in Moira s breast an tore it away

You two-faced little hypocrite ' he grinds out. glarin at her, I'm done with you An he turned an run out of the house

I stood there thunderstruck lookin from the door to Moira an back again Presently Moira riz up slowly She was very white in the face, but not cryin

Go into the kitchen an' talk to my mother a while, sez she, an then away home Tell her I m gone to lin down I don t know what has happened Pat but you li know when I know '

In two or three days time it was all over the town that Moira an' Frank had stopped keepin company I waited a week, an' then went to ask Moira was it true.

The mother gripped me by the hand an sent me into the kitchen to Moira. Moira was stil a little paler nor her usual but her smile was as cheery as ever

Don t look so solemn Pat, sez she If you get a tooth out without gas it heals all the sooner An I ve cut a wisdom tooth in exchange Poor Frank ' sez she. He s sorry, an I'm sorry , but all is for the best I can see it, now

' I'm no bigot, Moira ' sez I " My dearest friends are on both sides. But I li. give in I m heart glad You promised to tel me the cause.

She looked at me like a wee saint, with her big solemn eyes.

I think. Pat ' sez she. ' it was somethin beginnin with the letter p

I hesitated a minit an then I guessed it

" You re right child," sez I, as serious as herself Providence it was an' nothin else.

Her purty lips opened in a smile of pure roguery

" Not a capital ' p,' Mr Murphy," she sez. I didn't know where to hide the tricolour that day so I tied it round my waist with a string an made a petticoat of it "

# ACROSTICS

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 244.

That Harry has a dread of
One well can understand
He heard of it and read of it,
Then had it at first-hand.
His stern reproof by Harriet
Each night should warn men who
Are not engaged to marry yet
Of how some w ves can coo

1 Is borax to be had?
Then metal you must add.
2 Fair signifies the word,
You need its central third
3 Within the seaweed
A high priest doth appear
4. The ant you here should take
From it an isle to make
5. Exactness out from it
The pungent half omit
6. A Northerner a hope
You see the antelope
7 It rhymes with words that mean
Evasion, tool. and screen.

S. I. E. N.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 245.

Polish, it is plain,
Witnessed the campaign.

1 The breeze is by the maiden found.
To use it you must turn part round,
2 A flower by the spring awoken,
It almost sounds as were spoken.
3 Tis here they arrive up and down,
Some riding folk in London town

BOODLEBAH.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 243.

Amongst the branches in the spring
You hear these songsters carolling.

1 This once a certain youth put in.
A taste of tongue for fruit to win.
2. Though welcome certainly to friends,
Unwelcome this from heaven descends.
3. Here you can look upon a Queen
In one of our Dominions seen.
4. Slight increase of an ocean tells
Its nature when the tempest swells
5. Though pale within, we see it bear
A boastful and pretentious air
6. A nation, on its way to find
A home, this mountain calls to mind.
7 Bubbling it may be, yet in vain
You think the wine might prove champagne.
8. Just twist a drain about, and see
It, fast as low as it can be.
9. Footsteps are sometimes this, and you
May so style the pursuers, too.

W B.

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# Mr GEEN LOSES HIS WATCH

By

## STORM JAMESON

*Illustrated by JOHN FINLOTT*

THERE he sat, a man of middle height, grey-haired, a drooping grey moustache, hands folded meekly on his knees, while the Managing Director made his bland little speech. Forty-two years of faithful service . . . never a day's extra leave . . . never a blunder . . . never unpunctual . . . reliable . . . industrious . . . a pleasure and a privilege . . . this small recognition of services . . . some regret mingled with the satisfaction . . . end of a long, happy association.

Mr Geen rose to receive a gold watch, with his name and the inscription inside the cover, and the note-case containing, he knew, fifty pounds in ten-pound notes. His eyes, at once subservient and noticing, fixed themselves on the Managing Director's waistcoat. His thanks were halting and long-winded, but he was not shy. He had something to say, and he was determined to finish it. He knew that young Calvert was longing to get away, fidgeting there in a corner, thinking of his girl. It was some satisfaction to know that however long he chose to make his thanks, young Calvert would have to sit there, silent, and that Mr Geen was wont to think of as his "silly impudence" bottled up inside him.

Mr Geen prosed on, and young Calvert swallowed a groan of impatience. He imagined the frown darkening on Rosie's pretty face as she waited, and what she would say to him. I'll be all of forty minutes late, he thought. The silly old buffer's going to talk till seven—it's his last go, I suppose. Forty-two years. . . . A queer child ran in young Calvert's blood. What'll I be like then? . . . and Rosie? . . . He sat up angrily. Fifty pounds in that case, he said to himself. Five of my shillings. What can the old stick do with it and him not married? Save it. . . . How old d'he say he was? . . . fifty-nine . . . gosh, I wish they'd give it to me. . . . Rosie could have her ear-rings—oh Lord, how long?

Mr Geen sat down at last, refolding his hands. The Managing Director shook hands with him. "Must be off now, Geen, good bye." A few of his colleagues came up, shook hands and hurried off. Young Calvert shot from the room calling "Bye-bye, old man," and in less than five minutes Mr Geen found himself descending the stairs for the last time, alone. . . .

Outside it was already dusk. He felt a little queer—rather as though he were in one of those dreams where you find yourself in church in your night-shirt. He glanced down quickly at his trousers. . . . never wear out. He had a sudden fantastic vision of these trousers, his best office ones, looking reproachfully at him from the wardrobe morning after morning for the rest of his life. This was too much. I'm losing my senses, he thought nervously. The new watch weighed strangely on his wrist. Why had they got a wrist watch? All at once he felt very tired.

He decided not to go straight home where his unmarried sister would be expecting him. With a sense of fearful waste and recklessness he walked over to a taxi-rank and told the man to drive him to Shorts.

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It was in Short s that he discovered his loss. He raised his left arm self consciously to look at the new watch, and it was not there Bewildered, he stared at his bare wrist The watch had not been on it long enough for him to take in at once that it had

*"One of you has got my watch," said Mr. Green thickly.*

really gone. He felt quickly on the other wrist, then in his pockets. With trembling fingers he turned over the papers in his despatch case, and then, remembering that he had once found a sixpence there, bent down and felt in the turn-up of his trousers. All uselessly. The watch had gone.

The blood rushed violently to his head. Forcing himself to keep quiet, he tried to remember when he had last been conscious of its pressure on his wrist. He recalled a glint of it when he was opening the taxi door. At once he realized what had happened. In the agitation of taking it from the Managing Director's hand he must have strapped it on loosely, and in the taxi it had slipped off.

The next hour was a nightmare. After a miserable visit to Scotland Yard, where an unsympathetic official wrote down a few of his frenzied statements, he took another taxi back to the rank. A despairing colloquy with all the drivers in turn ended in one man remembering that it was old Walter's cab he had taken. They urged him to wait until old Walter returned, and he sank down thankfully, shaking in every limb, in the stuffy shelter. His head was throbbing. He could hear the hoarse, friendly voices of two drivers who seemed to feel sorry for him, but not what they said.

AT last old Walter returned, and was instantly surrounded by his friends, all anxious to tell him Mr. Geen's story. Mr. Geen meanwhile tried feebly to tell his own story. Not a word of it reached old Walter's ear until that stalwart plucked him suddenly by the arm and said: "Now then, tell us yourself." There was an interested silence while Mr. Geen told him. Two of the drivers had begun to search the cab. "'E says it was a presentation," one of them said, "I ain't never 'ad nothing presented, 'ave you, chum?" "Nothing 'ere, sir," they reported when Mr. Geen paused, "look for yourself if you want."

"Lemme think," old Walter said. Thinking turned him purple in the face. After a few congested minutes he said that he had only driven one fare since he put the gentleman down at Shorts. Mr. Geen's heart gave a wild jump. "Take me to the house," he ordered. Mr. Geen climbed in, and they moved very slowly off.

Twenty minutes later he was urgently ringing the bell of a small house in Shepherd's Bush.

A young woman opened the door. She was very young, and very pretty. So much Mr. Geen noticed, nearly in spite of himself, while he poured out his questions. She had seemed annoyed when she opened the door, as if he had come at an awkward moment, but as soon as he mentioned the watch her face changed. A bright look of recognition was succeeded by one of horror. She drew back, half shutting the door on him. Mr. Geen put his foot in it.

"Please go away now," she said, in a low voice. "*Please*. If you'll tell me where you live I'll write to you."

"Then you *have* got it," Mr. Geen cried.

The young woman's expression became distracted. "No, no—oh, I can't stay here talking to you. Do go."

"Not without my watch," Mr. Geen said.

He heard a door open inside the house. In the same instant the girl's hold on the front door slackened. Making a curious noise, half triumph and half apology, Mr. Geen flung himself into the house. A few hours ago he could never have imagined himself behaving in this way, and part of his mind was horrified to realize how little it took to turn a respectable, elderly clerk into something very like a bandit. He looked round him, panting. The door into a sitting-room was wide open and a man wearing a dinner-jacket filled the opening. "What the devil's all this?" said the man.

Mr. Geen felt a violent dislike for him. He was tall, about thirty, and extremely good-looking. The part of Mr. Geen which had not been transformed into a bandit noted that his voice was the disgustingly superior voice of a junior partner, and cringed weakly. Before he could speak the bandit took charge again. "One of you's got my watch," he said thickly.

"The fellow's drunk. What d'you let him in for, Mary?"

The pretty young woman looked from him to Mr. Geen. "I didn't quite understand him," she faltered.

Mr. Geen pounced. "That's not true," he said. "You understood me quite well. You told me to go away and you'd write."

The other man's eyebrows almost disappeared into the line of his sleek hair. "Are you mad, Mary?"

His loud, overbearing voice brought the colour back to her cheeks. "Don't speak to me like that," she said.

"You tell a tipsy old man that you'll write to him, and then you expect——"

"My dear Bertram, I don't expect anything from you any more," Mary said, in the voice of a defiant child.

Mr. Geen stared wildly from one to the other. Were they acting? His head swam. His distaste of the overbearing gentleman increased. He felt a sudden sympathy for the pretty girl, in spite of his conviction that she had stolen his watch and was now doing her utmost to mislead him.

"I insist on your giving me my watch," he said loudly.

The girl's body seemed to slacken. Before Bertram could utter the sentence visibly forming in him, she ran back into the sitting-room and slammed the door.

'I'll be damned,' Bertram said.

MR GEEN shot past him and flung open the door. The girl was standing against the table, her hands over her face—she did not even look up. A telephone bell began ringing at the back of the hall. Bertram hesitated, said "Wait—you" to Mr Geen, and went to answer it. Instantly the girl came to life. Seizing Mr Geen by the arm she opened a door into another room and half-pushed, half-pulled him inside. "Stay quietly there," she said in an urgent undertone. "I *promise* you it's all right. I'll explain everything."

The door shut and Mr Geen was in darkness. He felt frantically for the handle and found the light switch instead. He was in a kitchen. At the same moment he heard the girl say quickly

'He's gone. I sent him out by the back door—he must have been a lunatic.

It seems to me you behaved pretty strangely yourself,' Bertram said. His voice, that superior disagreeable voice, had the effect of checking sharply Mr Geen's movement to throw open the door. He was surprised by the depth of his loathing for the fellow. A faint sound behind him made him start round. The outer door of the kitchen was opening almost noiselessly to admit a man in a shabby overcoat. He was a young man—very young and very thin—and his clothes were wet.

The shabby young man glared at Mr Geen. "What are you doing here?" he asked, in a violent whisper.

Mr Geen's mind was moving quicker than it had moved during the whole of his forty-two working years. Fantastic ideas and images battled through it—he was in a coiners' den, among dangerous spies, he was going to be drugged, murdered—they were all in it. What steadied him was nothing in the least like courage, but that passion for justice for themselves which is always getting the English into trouble. I've been robbed, he said to himself. And what's more I won't stand it.

What are you doing here yourself?" he retorted in a hoarse whisper.

"What's your name?" the young man said next.

"Geen—the G's hard."

'God, what a name!"

"I fail to see anything wrong with it," Mr Geen said stiffly.

The shabby young man took a sudden step forward. Instantly the thought jumped into Mr Geen's mind—He's a burglar. He stepped backwards himself and seized the handle of the sitting-room door just as Bertram's voice rose bitterly.

My mother will be here any moment now. You knew she was calling for you at half-past, and you're not even dressed." Mary said softly. 'Need you always scold me?' Involuntarily Mr Geen paused, brought up by the ridiculous feeling that he ought not to interrupt two persons in private conversation. The instant's pause was long enough to bring the young man to his side. "Come away from that door and shut up," he said in a furious whisper.

Shan't," Mr Geen whispered back.

Well be quiet, anyway. I want to listen.

As he lifted his arm Mr Geen let go of the door handle and flew at him. The unexpectedness of the assault knocked the young man half-across the room. Flinging his hand up he struck the edges of a row of pans which clattered to the floor. The door behind Mr Geen opened with violent suddenness. He turned round and was seized by one of Bertram's arms. The young woman was pulling at the other. When she saw the thin, shabby young man, she let go of Bertram and pressed her hands to her cheeks.

Henry! What are you doing here?" she said in a low voice.

The young man had recovered his balance. I'm sorry, my darling,' he said. 'This old fool"—he looked with bitter loathing at Mr Geen—'practically knocked me down.'

'And who,' Bertram asked, letting go of Mr Geen, 'is this?' There was some genuine bewilderment in his voice.

Mary was looking at the shabby young man with a strange smile. They were about an age, and when she ran round the table to him Mr Geen thought they were like two children trying to defend themselves against the grown-ups.

Henry looked at her adoringly. 'I'm ghastly sorry, darling,' he said again. 'I came back because I wanted to remind you about something, and when I came in this old fool——

Bertram rapped hard on the table—the sound turned Mr Geen's blood to ink in him. "Mary. Will you explain?" he said.

She was really very pretty, round flushed cheeks, soft hair and eyes neither brown nor grey and very clear. She was not tall. There was a very noticeable sort of ring on her engagement finger. She looked directly at Bertram, at the shabby young man, and then again at Bertram.

'I suppose I'd better tell you," she said, speaking with a great deal of simplicity.

# Mr. Geen Loses His Watch

We were going to run away t[illegible] I ought to have told you about it but I knew you would [illegible] I can't bear being argued with." She added quickly. "You mustn't think [illegible] We haven't seen each other for [illegible] until this afternoon and then he just came—and I—we went and walked in St. James's Park and [illegible] over and decided to run away." The faintest of smiles crossed her face. "We didn't notice how the time was going and it was very late when I remembered you were coming for me at seven and we took a taxi. . . . But he oughtn't to be here now . . ." She looked at Henry as though she could not bear to scold him.

There was a short silence until Bertram said: "You're positively childish, Mary."

Mr. Geen saw that he was dreadfully at a loss. Before anyone could answer him the front door bell rang. "That will be my mother," Bertram said, stiffly. No one moved for a moment. Then, a little diffidently, Mr. Geen murmured: "Let . . ." He [illegible] their eyes on him as he bustled out into the hall, but no one seemed inclined to forbid him. When he opened the door a be-furred elderly lady swept past him with something much less than a glance. The group in the kitchen caught her eye as she thrust towards it, smiling a gracious smile. Mr. Geen knew that smile well—man and boy, for forty-two years he had seen it at the firm's annual garden-party, fixed on the faces of directors' wives like a china plate on a wall. For the first time in his sedate life it stirred fury of resentment in him. He forgot his watch, forgot that he had practically forced his way into a strange house, and with a confused passionate notion of defending the two young people against that odious smirk he hurried back into the

*When the young woman saw the thin, shabby young man on the floor, she let go of Bertram and pressed her hands to her cheeks*

kitchen. The smile had slipped a little sideways as its possessor said, with alarming vivacity: "Why, Mary dearest, you're not ready!"

"I'm not coming to dinner," Mary said.

Bertram interrupted in a calm voice. "Mary has just told me that she wants to run away with this—ah—young man."

On his mother's face an expression of overwhelming relief was rounded off by surprise and annoyance. "I'm afraid I don't quite understand, Bertram. Who is this young man?"

"I don't know," said Bertram, with marked distaste.

Mary and the shabby young man spoke at once. Obeying a gesture from the girl he fell silent and Mary said: "I don't expect you could ever understand, Mrs. Durston. Or ever forgive me." She paused, looked at Bertram with something like pity on her round young face, and said quietly: "I can't marry Bertram. I thought I could and now I can't." She looked once at the shabby young man. "Henry and I have been in love since we were ten. He went away two years since, and I thought I—I mean I—you were very kind—I'm very fond of Bertram and grateful to him. Oh, please forgive me. I, I can't——"

"Very interesting," was Mrs. Durston's comment. She was clearly going to say more, but slow footsteps sounded in the hall, the door opened once more to admit another elderly woman. Of a very different kind. She did not look in the least like the wife of a director, but she looked like the elderly women Mr. Geen was used to meeting in his own walk of life—a little harassed, a little too old for her age, and a little tired. Her hands and eyes were much older than the rest of her.

"Mummy!" Mary cried. "Why have you come down?"

Her mother smiled shyly at Mrs. Durston and Bertram. "I heard all your voices and I couldn't just sit upstairs."

"I'm very glad you've come," Mrs. Durston pronounced. "Your daughter has just informed my son that she doesn't want to marry him. It appears she prefers—this."

Mary's mother had turned very pale. She looked round for a chair and sat heavily down with a piteous look at Mary. At Henry she did not even look. Her whole attitude was that of a person on whom an expected blow has fallen at last.

"Can't you leave mummy out of it?" Mary said swiftly. She sent an imploring look at both the Durstons.

"Sorry," Bertram said, maliciously. "But I'm afraid she's rather walked into it." He looked at Mary's mother. "Have you any influence with your daughter, Mrs. Thomas?"

Mrs. Thomas clutched the edges of her chair. "I don't think she meant it, Bertram," she said earnestly. "She's a kind good girl. She wouldn't do anything wrong or silly."

"I'm afraid she scarcely realizes how guilty she has been." Mrs. Durston put in. "Bertram is too patient with her."

Mary took no notice of this. She went over to her mother and began stroking her hands. "Please listen, dear. You know I'll be happy with Henry. I don't care if we're poor and I have to work hard, I don't mind work. You're happy with dad, aren't you, and you've never had more than would just do."

"You know I'll take care of her, Mrs. Thomas," Henry said anxiously, his face tense and so still that nothing about him moved except his eyes, which were extraordinarily bright and quick. Mr. Geen was looking at them with admiration, when Mrs. Durston's voice made him jump. She had lost her temper suddenly. "This is disgusting," she screamed. "I can't stay here—and if you take my advice, Bertram, you'll come with me. I was always against the marriage, always—but you can't say I've failed in my duty—but when it comes to wanting to break things off at the last minute, the invitations out and presents pouring in—oh, it's too much. What need you have mixed yourself up with such people? Such a place! It was an insult to me and your father."

Her son did not move. If his hands had not been trembling he would have seemed quite composed. "My dear mother. You mustn't get angry just because you don't like Mary. Let me talk to her."

THERE was a brief silence, in which Mr. Geen was once more conscious of Henry's eyes watching, while his young body pressed itself against the door, watching Bertram watching Mary drop her mother's hand and stand up to face Bertram. She seemed to stiffen under his unsmiling gaze.

"You haven't any real complaint to make against me, have you, Mary?" Bertram said.

"You've been very kind to me," Mary said steadily.

"We've sometimes been quite happy together?"

"Yes," Mary said.

"Yesterday afternoon—before this young—friend of yours came back you were looking forward to being married to me. Do you know what's happened to you, my dear girl? You've been swept off your feet by something which isn't real any longer. It's like thinking how lovely it would be to have nursery tea again—you feel that way about it just because you're grown up and can't have it. And if you could you wouldn't enjoy it. If you run away with this young man you'll find that out—a little too late. The glamour will go and you'll be miserable and dissatisfied. At least give yourself a week to think it over." His smile was not very secure and for the second time Mr. Geen felt a little sorry for him. "There'll be no harm done by waiting. You can still run away from me if you want to."

Mary put her hand quickly on his arm.

"You're very good and patient with me," she said simply. "I wish you weren't."

"Don't you think you owe me at least a week?" Bertram said, quietly.

There was a quick inarticulate sound from Henry. Mary half turned and then with dreadful suddenness Mrs. Thomas cried out. "I can't bear it, Mary. I can't bear it," she said. Tears ran over her face on to her poor hands. Mary had run to her and was trying every way to soothe her, but she went on crying in a terrible helpless way, as if she were quite done. "I can't bear you to be as poor and hard-set as I've been. I've been so happy these last weeks thinking of you safe and well-off. Oh Mary, Mary, don't do it, don't do it. Oh, don't do it."

Bertram came to her other side and leaned over her. "It's all right, Mrs. Thomas," he said gently.

Mary doesn't understand," Mrs. Thomas said more quietly. "I've looked after her. She doesn't know what it's like to work and go on working, no matter if you feel you'll die. Look at my hands." She spread them out as if her life was in them.

*Exposed*

THE boy standing stiffly by the door moved.

"Mary!" he said.

Mary turned slowly. They stood looking at each other for a minute without speaking. Then she lifted her hands to her face. "It's no use. I can't now," she said.

Aren't you coming?" Henry burst out.

I can't." She closed her eyes. "Maybe we were making a mistake—seeing you suddenly after these years upset me. I——" she looked at him again—"oh, I don't know," she cried. "You'd better go, Henry. I can't do what we said—I——" There was a short silence. Mrs. Durston opened her mouth to speak, but her son gripped her arm and with an effort she restrained herself.

All right," Henry said. He picked his shabby hat up and went out.

Mrs. Durston shook off her son's hand. Well, Bertram, I hope you're satisfied," she said bitterly. "But if you want my opinion——" she broke off her glance for the first time taking in Mr. Geen. "Who is this person, Bertram?"

Mr. Geen was suffering acutely from disappointment. A miserable feeling that everything had gone wrong was succeeded by the dreadful sense that he was in a peculiarly embarrassing situation. He remembered his stolen watch suddenly: the bustling shock of recollection struck him at the same moment as Mrs. Durston's unpleasant sounding remark. The two together produced a most extraordinary effect in him. The instincts and emotions of forty-two years of faithful service were shrivelled by a blast of fury. White with rage he advanced towards Mrs. Durston.

"My good woman," he began—the table came in his way, and he stopped to rap sharply on it—"don't you speak to me like that. I won't have it."

I don't know who the devil you are," Bertram exclaimed. "But I've had enough. Out you go."

"Not without my watch," Mr. Geen said loudly for the second time. "You lay a finger on me and it's robbery with violence." A faint qualm invaded him, and he turned on Mary with something like pleading. "It was *presented* to me," he said. "I've got to have it. See? My sister's waiting supper for me all this time, too. I don't know what she'll say."

For the first moment since the door closed on the shabby young man a little life showed in Mary's face. "Why, the poor man," she said quickly. She came over to him and put her hand gently on his arm. "Do forgive me—I've behaved shamefully to you. I haven't got your watch. We found it in the cab and he—Henry—was going to take it to Scotland Yard." She had drawn him out into the hall. Bending her head she whispered quickly. "You'd better ask him first if he remembered to take it there—he's staying at a boarding-house—listen—at 189, Seymore Street. Tell him—tell him I'm sorry. He's to go back and not think of me."

Mr. Geen thought she gave a little sob, but she had opened the front door and was pushing him gently out.

His legs were trembling violently as he walked away. The excitement that had filled him had vanished and he felt dreadfully weak. It was raining, and the thought of what he could say to his sister to pacify her gnawed at him miserably. As he turned into the main road he ran full into Henry.

The boy was leaning against the wall, his hands thrust in his pockets. The light from a street-lamp fell on his face. When Mr. Geen spoke to him he made a visible effort to attend.

Watch?" he echoed politely. Trembling with fatigue and anxiety, Mr. Geen began again. The boy's face changed suddenly. "Yes. Yes, I remember now." He began to hunt through his pockets while Mr. Geen waited holding his breath. At last he said vaguely. "I think I must have left it on the dressing-table."

This new blow stunned Mr. Geen. "On the dressing-table?" he said vacantly.

"Yes. Look here. You'd better come back with me," Henry said. He set off at

a great rate with Mr Geen running desperately beside him. A cab was coming slowly towards them and Mr Geen hailed it. As he sank on to the seat [illegible] believe you'd have walked the whole way.

Why not? Henry asked, simply.

"It's miles," Mr Geen said.

Well, I'm used to walking, Henry said. He looked at Mr Geen and began to speak in a rush, the words tumbling over each other. I have a small dairy farm, it's my own, I used to [illegible] it with my brother, but he's dead, and I thought Mary and I could just manage on it, and she said, Yes, she'd come, we'd have to run away, she said, to save trouble—we were going to-night, there's a train at eleven-thirty from Paddington, and now I'll be going on it alone and I wish it need never get there.

Never mind,' Mr Geen said.

A sensation unlike any he had ever had welled up in him. He felt sorry for Henry—and still sorrier for himself—an intolerable feeling that he had never lived took possession of him. And now it was too late. Never would he be able to suffer as Henry was suffering now. He felt a shocking envy

The boarding house was a very poor one, and as they went upstairs Mr Geen shuddered for the safety of his watch. He saw it the moment they opened the door. On the bare dressing-table it looked like the Crown jewels. "There it is,' Henry said carelessly. Sorry you had to drag right back here.'

Mr Geen picked it up. And at once he knew that he did not care if he never saw it again.

Henry had seated himself on the edge of the bed. A small fibre suitcase lay packed in the middle of the floor near him, and he

*Mary came over and put her hand gently on Mr Geen's arm. "Do forgive me," she said. "I've behaved shamefully to you."*

asked it absently. He looked up as Mr Geen moved towards the door.

'Don't go yet,' he said.

'You don't want me,' Mr Geen said ridiculously.

'Yes, I do,' Henry said. 'I haven't got a soul to talk to.'

Mr Geen felt some of the sensations of being decorated on the field. He looked round for somewhere to sit. The chair was as shiny thing as a damp coffin, so he sat beside Henry on the bed and made appropriate sounds. Speech was not required of him. It was half-past ten when he rose to leave. Henry looked [illegible] disgusted.

'You might as well come along,' he said. 'Even Paddington isn't as bad as this room.'

They began to descend the stairs just as a large female figure shuffled along the passage to answer the front door bell. A girl's voice, thin, clear and very anxious,

asked for Mr Henry Marsh. Not at this hour the woman snapped

Mary! Henry cried

He began to leap down the stairs as Mary ran in, pushing past the woman She was clutching a small suitcase in ungloved hands and Mr Geen saw that the so not desirable ring had gone As Henry hurried her upstairs the woman shouted after them both in a shrill fury Mr Geen ordered her to hold her tongue and her instant sulky obedience gave him a thrill of triumph When you came to think of it there was not much to choose, in degree of authority between a junior partner and a trusted senior clerk After a few moments he went slowly back to Henry's bedroom The two of them were standing in the middle of the little space left between the bed and the door, their arms round each other's necks

"Oh, my dear love, Henry said

I couldn't live without you Mary said in a serious voice. I don't care how poor we are or how hard I have to work You're all I want and nothing else matters

"We shan't be so dreadfully poor," Henry said anxiously "It's a nice farm and dairy work isn't bad

I don't care if it is, Mary said

Henry made a queer gruff noise, something between a shout and a sob. "I've *got* to know," he said. You weren't ever in love with that sleek beast, were you?

Mary looked at him He wasn't a beast she said in a soft voice If you've got to know I've got to be honest I didn't love him, but I liked him -and I liked the idea of being well-off- you mustn't hate me for it- it was all wrong, Henry- he kept telling me how to pronounce my words—he meant to be kind, and if I'd been in love with him I shouldn't have minded

You won't be disappointed in me? the boy said

Never never never You'll never disappoint me

A tremor ran through Mr Geen—he felt afraid and excited at once. So young and so rash They don't know what life's like he thought An astonishing conviction that they knew more than he did seized him He gave a little involuntary groan, and tried to pass it off by saying sharply You'll miss that train, you know To his unutterable astonishment he heard himself add I think I'll see you off

AT the end of Seymore Street he beckoned a taxi and said Paddington -in a deliberately curt voice He wanted to hide his excitement and his wild inexplicable happiness from the lovers—even though he knew in his heart that they were too deeply sunk in each other to take more than a very little notice of him. They reached Paddington with about eight minutes to spare The station wore the unnatural theatrical air common to big stations at night It made Mr Geen think of a huge aquarium tank, with porters and passengers rushing through brownish water He paid the taxi, seized Mary's bag, and hurried her off to find a carriage while Henry went for their tickets. They walked along in silence until Mary spoke suddenly

How funny that we've become friends like this

Not really funny Mr. Geen said brightly He opened the door of an empty compartment Mary stepped in, and immediately jumped out again, threw both arms round Mr Geen's neck, and kissed him

There," she said "I had to do it Do you mind?

A delicious emotion filled Mr Geen He felt a profound gratitude to this surprising young woman It was only the second time in his life that he had been kissed by a young woman, and the first was so long ago that he had forgotten it besides it had not been a success. When Henry arrived carrying the tickets, Mr Geen was feeling in the inside pocket of his jacket for the new note-case. He drew out four of the five notes and pushed them into Henry's hand Wedding present," he said

Henry looked at them in stupefaction The train started as he found his tongue

Here -we can't take all this money he said, urgently Leaning crazily from the window he tried to reach Mr Geen's hand with it

Mr Geen waved his own gaily For you both, he shouted I don't want it Good-bye. Good luck"

He ran beside the train for a moment until his breath failed and he had to stop But he waved and smiled until the train had vanished into the darkness between the signal lights

As he turned away a horrid sense of disaster assailed him He felt cold and suddenly empty, realising that he would never be able to explain things to his sister He caught sight of himself in the mirror of a weighing machine and was startled by his air of dissipation. But Mary kissed me he said to himself His dejection vanished as suddenly as it had come. An exquisite sensation of warmth and happiness flowed through him In an excited confused way he was aware that the past five hours had provided him with a number and richness of satisfactions which were conspicuously lacking from forty-two years of faithful service. He stumped down the platform, fingering a depleted note-case, and almost laughed out

# ENGLAND THE INEXHAUSTIBLE

By

## E. V. LUCAS

C.H.

Pictured by J. Dixon Scott.

THE more I have seen of the world, the more I have liked England and desired to return to it and the more I see of England the more I am surprised by its beauty, by its extent and particularly in these times of housing schemes, arterial road making, chicken farms, and rural electrification by its wealth of unharmed purity. The illustrations that accompany these words, drawn from various parts of the country, help to prove how inviolable England still can be and what treasures she preserves for those who will seek for them.

And not only for those who seek: a phrase which suggests deliberate penetration into the more remote and inaccessible regions, because England can flaunt her treasures too. On the very day in March, for instance, on which, in response to an invitation from the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, I began to reflect on the form this article should take, I was delighted as I passed through two of London's newest suburbs, by the occasional occurrence, in a front garden, of an almond tree in bloom: one of those gracious and enchanting miracles such as we are supposed to go to Japan for. I have been to Japan, but I saw nothing in the cherry orchards there more exquisite than these sudden apparitions of loveliness among the red brick of Kitchener Avenue and Sandringham Villas, S.E.

A slogan employed by the tourist companies or association of hotel proprietors a year or so ago urged us not to travel abroad until we had disposed of our own country—thus providing an unexpected commentary upon Mr. Kipling's famous question, "What should they know of England who only England know?" The slogan ran "See England First," and I, for one, while recognizing that it is something of a counsel of perfection, agree with it, but I am bound to add the warning that no one who really sets out to see all the England that is worth seeing—and probably the British Isles in their entirety were meant—will ever be able to go abroad at all, and the knell of the new pastime of cruising will be sounded.

For England is inexhaustible. Even in one's own locality, where nothing new is to be expected and where it is fashionable to open our casual conversation by a general condemnation of pylons, discoveries are constantly being made. In my own, for instance, after more than a year's regular week-end exploration, I have just found, within three miles of my abode, a twelfth century water-mill where one can both drink tea and enjoy in a Canadian canoe a mile of winding river, a moated Tudor grange, close by, watered by the same stream, where old furniture may be bought and more tea consumed, and a stately reserved Tudor manor house, set very unusually on a hill with gables, mullioned windows, and a giant cedar on the lawn. There they were, all these three architectural gems, there they have been for several centuries, but as they are on by-ways I had missed them, or, in other words, the clock had not struck.

You will observe that in the foregoing

paragraph tea was twice mentioned. The [illegible] of life and the strange results that it can [illegible] the villages and lanes of England is due largely to the dried leaves of a shrub [illegible] the slopes of the Himalayas. [illegible] The preparation of tea for the refreshment of travellers is now perhaps the principal national industry, and although it is wel[illegible] preferably Elizabethan. This being the [illegible] and whitewashed cottage displays the so desired notice, the brusque hand of the demolisher will be stayed.

THERE is another link between English architectural survivals and a product of foreign soil to which I must refer very different in its application and not so whole heartedly to be commended, and yet with all its implications, also a boon and a blessing. Tea is a comfort when we get there, but how would most of us get there at all, were it not for a viscous fluid that gushes from the earth in Persia, in Russia, in the Balkans and the two Americas? But for the mineral oil that makes the motor-bus and char-à-bancs to go, millions of people who are now enabled to visit English beauty spots would never see them, and without such popular attention these beauty spots would soon pass to that inimical vandal, the developer of residential estates.

By those who have cars of their own, by those who live beside highways, and by those who prefer walking, the charabanger is not hailed with joy. But they should reflect that but for him their own eyes would be the poorer. So far from despising him and deploring his existence, whenever I pass a char-à-bancs or motor-bus station in London and read the names of the destinations, how (being on my way to an office) I envy the people who are taking their seats. This, say, is for Ipswich, that for Dover, one bound for the towns and villages of Essex and Suffolk, the other of Kent, both about to adventure up hill and down under a wide sky, over rivers, past gentlemen's places, possibly even past deer parks, past greens and cottages, past meadows of sheep and lambs, past woods, lakes, towers, and spires. If the sight of a railway terminus has never moved me to such stimulating thoughts the reason must be the road, the call of the road, and, as a corollary, of inexhaustible England.

Petrol having imposed itself upon us—having at its own proper hour arrived—it is idle any longer to abuse it, and for my own part I am grateful to it for giving back to the road what the rail took away. And but for petrol, it must be remembered, there would not only be fewer preserved beauty spots but we should still have dust. None must always have been present, although my own choice would put the beat of hoofs and the crack of whips before the Kuxon. Dust, however that did so much harm in obscuring the countryside and defacing the cottage garden, has now gone for ever, while another benefit to England that petrol has conferred is the by-pass, which rarely destroys anything valuable and allows the village street again to be a sleepy thoroughfare where no one drives too fast.

All the same, motoring is no way to see the country. It is merely a means of transport. There is only one way in which to explore England if you would wrench from her her best secrets, and that is on foot. On horseback is good, but there are restrictions. A horse cannot go everywhere. Only on foot is one wholly free to follow every impulse, to linger or to hasten, and above all to retrace a deed which no chauffeur will enact except under sulky protest. This, perhaps, is why motoring is so tragically the wrong way of moving about a beautiful land: that not only does one not see what is best, as one rushes past, but one has the sweet yet bitter memory of lanes and footpaths that should have been taken. Of what use to a motor-car is a stile? And yet there is no better approach than a stile to the kind of country which those of us who love England love most.

While looking, the other day, through some old letters, I came upon one from that gifted and original draughtsman and decorator who [illegible] the postscript to which ran: "Have you ever [illegible] England? None of your artful and crafty Letchworth business, but good cobby stocky jolly countryside [illegible]." The answer is that I hadn't although ever since I began to write I have been nibbling at such a work, but should I now attempt it it could not, alas! have the inestimable privilege of a pictorial commentary by the designer of the costumes and scenery of "The Beggars' Opera." In default of that pencil I can think of nothing more illuminating than Mr J. Dixon-Scott's camera studies, such as accompany these words, for this gentleman has an eye for what is typical and what is beautiful, and Nature and architecture equally seem to be desirous of giving him a helping hand.

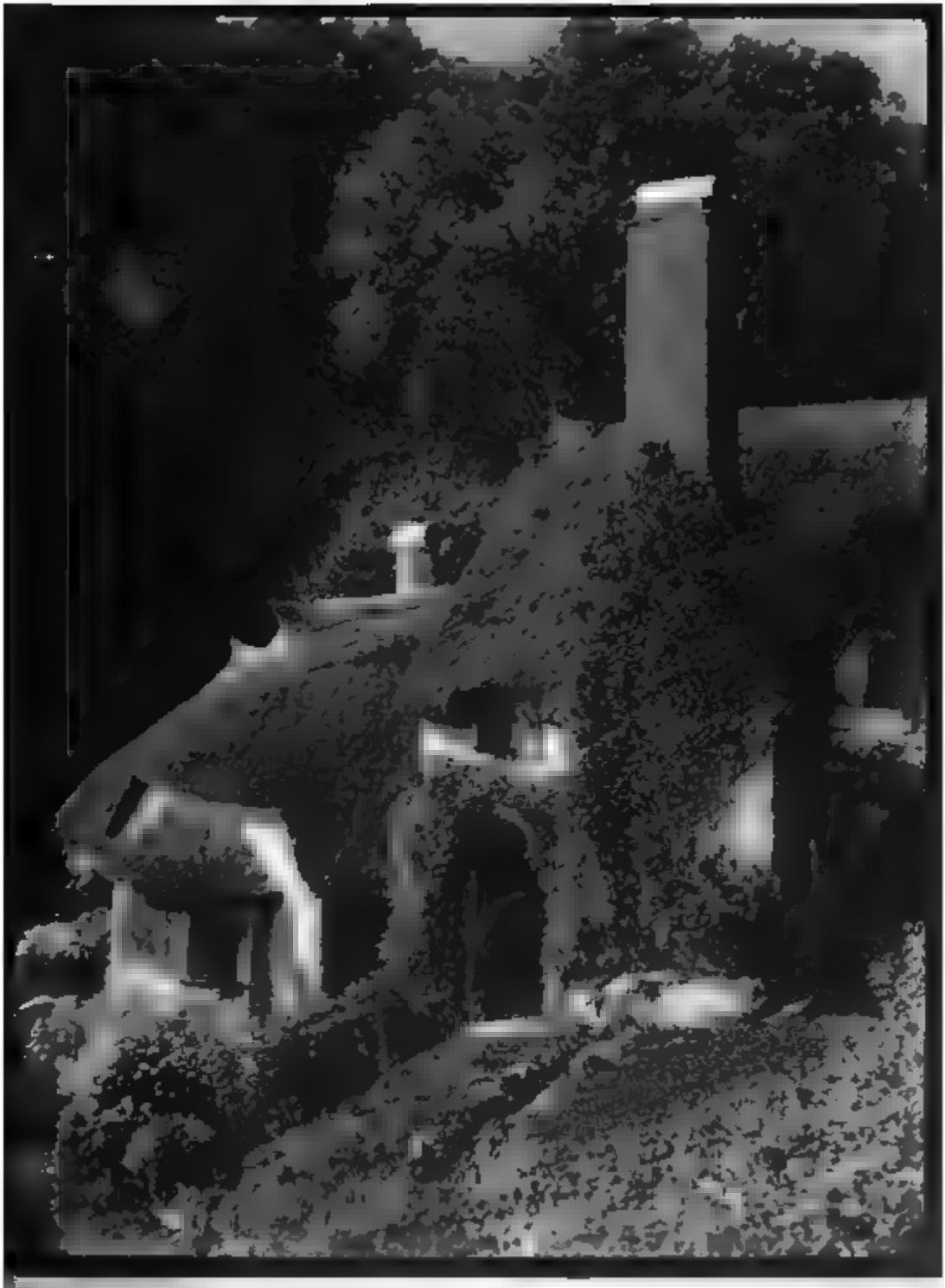
The photographs here, choice as they

(Continued on page 633.)

*In a very riot of leafage—the church of Freefolk Priors, in the valley of the Test, Hampshire*

*The bridge and church of a very ancient part of England—Aylesford, Kent*

*Harvesting above the valley of Bagworthy Water, Exmoor*



*In Sunny Somerset The entrancing beauty of a thatched cottage in the village of Selworthy*

*The picturesque village of Cheddar, nestling beneath the Mendips. Near by is the famous Gorge, with its wonderful stalactite caves.*

*Heber's Ghyll. This beautiful waterfall, in a Yorkshire woodland setting, is one of the main delights of those who visit Ilkley.*

*Peaceful Surrey. A view of a fine old watermill on the River Mole, near Dorking*

Above *A beauty spot in the Isle of Wight. Winkle Street in the quaint old village of Calbourne.*

Below *Picturesque old houses which charm the eye in the village of Lavenham, Suffolk*

*What more typical scene of an English summer could be found than this delightful picture taken on the road at Calverton, Bucks?*

ure, could be indefinitely multiplied. Indeed, I would undertake within a radius of twenty-five miles of London to find as many more sets of eight all as typical of English beauty and as worthy of reproduction. And if we could have such a harvest near London, what would not the byways of the more distant territory yield?

MOST of Mr. Dixon-Scott's examples of English domestic scenery are a day's journey from London, but the three of them that could be visited from London in an afternoon offer to the traveller by road very interesting journeys. Take as our first objective the village of Freefolk Priors in Hampshire, in the picture of which you see the well and the church in a very riot of leafage. Freefolk Priors, adjoining Laverstock, is ten miles beyond Basingstoke and therefore about fifty-six from London. The direct road takes you through Staines, past the King's own Windsor pleasance, past Virginia Water, past the great heath country at Bagshot, and so to the valley of the Test with the shining and brimming trout-stream advancing serenely on your right, and the great wooded uplands of Hampshire, teeming with game, on both sides of the road. There are no better villages than those beside this delectable river, the angling capital of which is Stockbridge, and even if machinery has crept in, it carries with it a not too disagreeable association, the great mill at Laverstock being the place where the paper for Bank of England notes is made. No harm if with the burble of the Test mingles the rustle of a fiver.

This Freefolk Priors excursion is the longest of the shorter emprises which Mr. Dixon-Scott's camera suggests. The church of Aylesford, with its ancient bridge over the Medway, is only about thirty-five miles from London, in Kent all the way. Your journey on the Rochester road will take you almost at once over Blackheath, where many of the Georgian residences built by rich Londoners still remain, past Greenwich Park, past Cobham Park on the right and, by a slight detour, past Gad's Hill on the left. Gad's Hill where Falstaff cut so poor a figure and, later, Charles Dickens made his home, in a house that is still almost exactly as he left it. At Rochester you will find a cathedral, a castle, old almshouses, the River Medway, and the aura of Dickens over all.

And then you will turn due south and after passing that odd assemblage of neolithic stones known as Kit Coty's House, swing to the right for the Medway again and Aylesford built about it. A very ancient centre this, for there is on the outskirts a Celtic burial-ground dating from the first century B.C., and the ford which supplies part of the town's name was used by the Romans. Returning by the Folkestone-London road you will find the Pilgrim's Way crossing the hill at Wrotham and think there of him who came before Shakespeare and Dickens as a sympathetic delineator of English life—Geoffrey Chaucer, whose [illegible] from the car at the top of this very steep hill above Wrotham and gaze south, you will have a better swift idea of the richness and manifoldness of the English country than any written words can convey. Immediately below you is the valley of the Darenth, in the middle distance is Sevenoaks on its heights, with the supremely satisfying Tudor mansion of Knole, hidden from view, as its chief glory, and then in the far distance the wooded expanses of Kent and Sussex, every acre containing something that is rare and beautiful and unspoiled. And if after looking at the water mill at Dorking you climb Box Hill you will have an even wider and wilder prospect right away to the South Downs of Sussex and Hampshire.

Mr. [illegible] only twenty-three miles from London, is on the River Mole—that stealthy winding stream so different from the merry, ardent Test—which rises in Sussex and joins the Thames near Hampton Court. To reach it you pass through the very heart of Surrey through Epsom, whither Londoners used to resort for their health, but go now, once a year, in the hopes, usually vain, of winning a little money, through Leatherhead, with its old inns and serene retreats, past Norbury Park with its Fanny Burney associations, past the foot of Box Hill, where you see Flint Cottage, where Meredith lived, over Burford Bridge, where Keats has leaned and brooded. From the author of "Evan Harrington," who is buried in the Dorking cemetery, it is an easy transition to Dickens again, who can never be far from our thoughts as we move about this England of the past, for he established the second Mrs. Weller in The Marquis of Granby in this town, and gave her there the spirituous comfort of the Reverend Stiggins.

If Mr. Dixon-Scott's pictures take you farther afield, I hope that no one will be deterred from the enterprise. The only one that is not typically English is that of Cheddar, the Cheddar cliffs and caves coming under the head of geological marvels. I can think of nothing more lovely in its way than the thatched cottage he has found at Selworthy in Somerset, while the white of the façades at Lavenham in Suffolk is a rapture apart. Of Winkle Street I know nothing; this is my first news of that Dickensian thoroughfare, but surely I shall go there. "See the Isle of Wight first," shall be my next motto.

# FEET OF CLAY

LADY CHATCOMBE was sitting on the club veranda under a huge lavender parasol when Roddie's machine touched in. You wouldn't have guessed she had been watching for it for the last two hours—unless you had noticed her eyes. She looked the coolest most bored and certainly the best-groomed dowager in the South of France, but there was trouble behind that still youthful complexion.

"Your son arrives," announced General Krozhetskoi, rather obviously. "At his age I was riding a bicycle, with *éclat*."

Isabel Chatcombe smiled, the General amused her as a type that recalled the days of gold lace, heel-clicking, Imperial Tokay dukes and ballerinas, and the iron etiquette of the Court of the Little White Tsar. "You would ride one with anything but *éclat* now," she said.

The boy on the aerodrome spotted the parasol as he handed the Morane-Pelisser over to the mechanics and with the girl who had been his passenger made his way over to her side.

"I thought you were going to play golf this afternoon," he reproved.

"The drive to Cannes bores me more each time. I've been watching the flying with the General and Ann."

"Ann?"

"She went back to play tennis or something." Lady Chatcombe's eyes shifted to the chic figure of the girl posed a shade too ravishingly beside her son. Something hard crept into her eyes and the almost imperceptible tensing of the muscles of her beautiful throat. "Did you enjoy your trip?"

The girl laughed. "I adored every minute of it!" She turned to meet her escort's grin.

"But your son, Countess, has made me frightfully late."

She's beautiful, Lady Chatcombe told herself fairly. She's trained to the last hair. Her clothes and figure are right. No wonder he's crazy about her. But that "Countess" set Lady Chatcombe's teeth on edge. And the last thing she dare say to Roddie about her was that this Scandinavian

*Vana*

*Ann*

# B. L. JACOT

*Illustrated by* BALLIOL SALMON

or Danish, or Russian—no one seemed to know which—Hollywood star was ten years at least his senior.

As the General gallantly accompanied Vana Nord and back to that palace of steel and concrete beyond the sheds, built by a German architect in France with English money to American ideals, she noticed with a start something strange in the way Roddie was standing, looking at her.

"You don't like her, do you?" he said.

She knew then that it was coming, the thing she had feared for the last two weeks. She allowed herself a moment to dwell on his wind-fingered hair, dark eyes, and that strong chin with his ready grin checked now by the boyish seriousness of his mood. Then she smiled up at him. "Why, Rod, I think she's beautiful."

"You do?"

"I think she's more than that. She's exquisite."

Impulsively he sat down beside her, holding on to her eyes incredulously. "That's fine of you, mother," he said. "I—I wanted to tell you that I'm going to ask her to marry me."

"I'm glad you told me first, Rod." If something cold had gripped her Lady Chatcombe did not show it. Hers was a type of beauty that only the English-speaking peoples can produce. An Italian woman must move before she is beautiful, a French woman must speak, a Slav must be moved by emotion, a Scandinavian act. Rarest of all is that sculptural beauty which is beauty in itself. Before the War London used to crowd to the Lyric, where to see Isabel Chatcombe was all they asked. But that was before she married Lord Chatcombe.

"You think it will be all right?" Rod was asking. "She's been married before. Twice. But I don't care. All I want is——"

"If you're happy—why, of course it's all right."

He was not looking at her now. "I meant about Ann. I've always had an idea you wanted me to marry Ann. We've known each other since we were children—and she's an awfully decent sort. I sort of feel I don't know quite how to put it."

"Ann is a girl in a million," she told him. "Twenty-two is a difficult age. What can you say to a boy of twenty-two?" "If I hoped that one day you and Ann would find yourselves in love with each other it was because—— Oh, there's a lot of truth in the old sayings, Rod. About it being best to marry in your own class. Easiest. And marriage is a difficult business. I ought to

know. Your father and I weren't exactly what anyone would choose to write an inspiring family book about. He married out of his class, Rod.

Oh, that's all rot, mother. Nowadays....'

Nowadays and any day. Everything changes and makes progress except a man's heart and all the fundamental things that really matter. You wouldn't marry a Negress.

Me? I should hope not. Why?'

"Would you marry an Indian woman? Or, say, a Mongol?' I don't see why not, unless you stick to the old truths. It's a matter of degree, that's all. Africa is right out of the orbit of England. If you stick to your own corner and habits you get along best.'

"But, mother! I'm only wanting to marry Vana! She's not coloured, or anything.

She laid a hand on his arm. I didn't say she was. Dear boy, she's beautiful, and if you're going to be happy so am I. It's easiest, though, if you can manage to marry in your own class. That's all.

I'm crazy about Vana. I don't know why exactly. But I can't sleep at night. I seem to be thinking about her all the time. Wondering what I could do to please her—make her think I'm, well, a finer sort of fellow than I really am.

It's like that with everyone. The first time. And,' she went on hurriedly, "you needn't worry about doing things to please her. You've given her everything anyone could think of. Why, Roderick Chatcombe, you've been spending in the last two weeks as much as you spent in a year before. Orchids, that pendant, this new aeroplane of yours——'

' I'm rich, though, mother.

That's lucky for you, Rod. Everyone hasn't that advantage. I don't see how you're ever going to spend all you've got. Lots of people would think you had everything.'

For a while he fixed her silently, then: 'That's what I think is the trouble with me. Everything's so certain, so sure with me. And people like us. Look at Ann. You know beforehand almost everything that's going to happen to her in the next fifty years. Her social position is unshakable—she couldn't move out of it if she tried. She has so much money it all means just nothing to her. Like it does to me. Settlements, reversions, entailments. A fellow goes to the same old schools, same old colleges, either it's the army or it isn't. On the Bench, Parliament. It's like reading a book you know by heart. Nothing happens unless someone allows it to."

Not a bad thing, Rod."

Vana's father was a peasant—a fellow who did the ploughing. She's the sort things can happen to. It seems more like life to me when things happen, when you're not stuck in the groove. Safe, sound, and with life tabbed like a ledger. About as romantic as a—

Cabbage" Lady Chatcombe rose. Take me in, Rod," she said. " I'm half expecting a song and dance. It's all too much like a play. Except that things have to happen in a play and nothing generally does in life. Let me know what Vana is going to do with you—some time. And I should keep away from Ann. Some day you'll recall she was rather fond of you.

VANA NORDLAND, Roddie Chatcombe knew, had to meet two men who had travelled down from Paris to see her about some contract her manager was negotiating. It meant he could not see her for two hours at least. He had learnt that screen celebrities, though in private life appointments meant nothing to them and they could forget engagements and keep you waiting for hours, had very different ideas about punctuality where a contract with a salary hanging on it was concerned. Vana had a shrewd business head, even if she believed as she professed that a man who could not wait for her was not worth bothering about.

It was as he wandered round the back of the giant sheds, after taking his mother back to her suite at the hotel, that he ran into the General. The old diplomat was perched on the gathering dusk on a steel platform grid in an angle of the fireproof walls, and he seemed to be examining something in the distance closely with his field-glasses. He started when Roddie hailed him.

Old soldiers never die," he explained to Roddie when he had joined him. Turning the war horse's eye over this marvellous bay.

At the head of a wake of white lace Roddie noticed a speed-boat far out at sea, and he remembered this later. At the time he was thinking what a curious old bird General Kroubetskoi was. It was said that after seeing the War through as far as Russia went he devoted himself and what was left of his immense fortune to fighting the revolution with a little white army of his own. For years, people said, though no one knew much about it, he kept his private war going, appearing unexpectedly here and there, anywhere East of the Baltic, losing all along the line. He finished, most reports agreed, with a handful

*"Vana," he stammered. "What's wrong?"*
*"Listen, darling," she said. "I've got to get to Italy to-night. You'll risk taking me across in your plane, won't you, darling?"*

of troops pushed tight into the snows of Siberia, and no one knew what became of him and his gallant army then. At seventy he now spent his life wandering aimlessly from capital to capital—a little too aimlessly some thought, especially high officials in Moscow, who had to deal with plots hatched abroad.

"I missed the only war I'm likely to see," Roddie told him.

The General shook his head. "Without war you get nothing out of civilization. To talk of Progress—that is to laugh, my friend. One war follows another as meal follows meal. A man does not change because he comes later into the world than his father. A good dog will fight, so too a good man. You will fight when the time comes, and the English are good dogs for a fight. What a history!"

It struck Roddie then that his mother had been saying something of the sort, but in a different way. "I'll be ready for it," he said. "There's not much to be got out of life, with everything ready and waiting for you round the next corner, all smoothed out and arranged."

"When enough people think that a war starts. It is the time." They had reached the terraces and the General threw up an arm in greeting. "The Lady Ann," he smiled.

Leaning on the stone wall with her ash blonde head turned out to sea, Ann Maturin's tall, boyish figure made a slim silhouette against the sunset she was watching. She turned and hurried over to them, her grey eyes fixing and holding Roddie's in the schoolgirl way they always followed him. Roddie turned away.

"Have a good trip this afternoon, Roddie?" she inquired.

He nodded absently. Then he remembered something. "By the way—that dance at the Couronne. It was to-night I was taking you, wasn't it?"

She nodded, still holding him with her wide grey eyes.

"Well, d'you mind if——"

"Of course not! It's all the same to me."

The General held up his hand. "Then I claim the privilege!" he insisted. "Fifty—no sixty years ago I have fought duels for the hope of less."

She laughed at that, twisting girlishly on her slender ankles. Ann had exquisite feet. "That would make you about a hundred and nine. You fought with bows and arrows, I suppose?"

"The arrows of Cupid. We had plenty, we beaux. And," he added, "when you bring your chaperon, the beautiful Lady Chatcombe, you shall hear plenty more like that to-night."

Roddie left them. That was like Ann. She never minded. He had known her such a time. You could depend on her. She always did the right thing at the right time. Never kept a man waiting an unnecessary minute in her life—and it wasn't as if she were plain. In London and out she was chased by the crowd, but she never seemed to take any interest in other men. Cold, in spite of her looks and her figure.

RODDIE rang through to Vana's suite four times that evening as the hour of their dinner approached. He could not keep still. When he thought of Vana having her all to himself, taking her somewhere far away from managers, contracts, other men, his fingers worked and his brain seemed to stand still. Some ten minutes after the time for which he had booked the little table with the flowers he had chosen himself, he felt someone tug at his elbow as he was entering the telephone *cabinet* to call her suite again.

"Vana——" he began, but she stopped him.

"Listen, darling! I have to go to Cannes. The General here is taking me and——"

"But, our dinner at the Bristol!" In spite of himself disappointment showed in his voice.

Gathering her fur wrap round her white shoulders she smiled up at him entrancingly. "Some other evening, darling. Don't run away while I'm gone!"

With an ache in his heart he watched her walk down the lounge to pick up the General and a man who looked like a Spaniard with a scar on his left cheek bone. A swirl of the swing doors and they were gone.

It was his mother who brought him out of his depths—he did not notice her standing before him at first. For an Englishman Roddie was showing his punishment. Up to the time, two weeks ago, when he had met Vana there had been little in his life he had to bother about. Most things he could want, someone had supplied before he even felt the need of them. Eton and Magdalen—he was turned out true to type. Too much money to bother about the army or the diplomatic service—what was there to do?

As his mother took him across the lounge to join Ann anyone could have read him at a glance. Only three tailors, all in Savile Row, could have made his clothes, his breeches and hunting gear would come out of Sackville Street on a safe bet, all his footwear from his father's man, and everyone else's, in St. James's Street, shirts from the Arcade. His life was like his clothes

the end of it being the only matter not bespoke, probably by his grandfather before him. Even his clubs, school and college were arranged as soon as his sex was known. And Roddie Chatcombe was feeling the weight of it that night.

He danced with Ann at the Couronne and talked with his mother but he did not remember it. He did not talk to Ann. She was the sort who was quite happy either way. They sat or danced together in silence after the General arrived puffing and apologetic for being late, to keep his promise as escort for Ann. Vana, he said, had stayed in Cannes with the Spaniard.

BACK in the hotel after Ann and his mother had retired Roddie paced about the public rooms, waiting for Vana to get back. For a while the General paced with him, for it seemed he was waiting for something, too. The old diplomat went off to bed soon after one o'clock, and it was as he turned to go that something happened which Roddie remembered later, again. The back of his wrist grazed the old man's pocket, and his knuckles struck something hard—steel. Shooting a quick look at Roddie to catch his puzzled glance, the General laughed.

"You're right," he said in his perfect English. "Shooting iron. I always keep it handy." Cupped in his palm he showed Roddie a small-calibre Colt automatic. Then, tucking it away again, continued on his way to the stairs. The lifts stopped at one o'clock.

Shortly after two Roddie went to bed himself. At twenty-two it takes more than the first dose of romantic despair to keep sleep at bay. But he had scarcely undressed before a discreet scrape on the panels of the outside door of his suite brought him up tense and queerly expectant. He switched off his lights and feeling his way to the hall opened the door.

It was Vana who slipped in, closing the door quietly behind her. "Don't make a noise," she cautioned. "Reputations are as slippery as eels in places like this." She switched on the light while he watched her dumbly. "You look a dear in pyjamas," she whispered, and pulling down his head clung to him for a moment to kiss him.

The soft closeness of her silky body made his head swim. His heart beat wildly at the touch of her warm lips. But she was patting her hair, gone from him before he realized it.

"Vana——" he stammered. "What's wrong?"

"Wrong?" she echoed. "Everything's all right for you, I should say. But listen, darling. I've got to get to Italy to-night. You know what folk are round here. If my contract has to be signed, sealed, and delivered here by the notaries in France, that's employing foreign artists. And the deal just doesn't come off, that's all. It means an awful lot to me, too."

"But Vana——"

"Sh-h! Not so loud. The option expires at noon to-morrow, so I've got to take it up in some country—any country except France. My passport's not ready for me to cross the frontier in the ordinary way and I have to be there before noon to-morrow. You'll risk taking me across in your plane, won't you, darling? I've got a man who knows the route like the back of his hand. Frezza is beaconed and lit anyway and you have an international pass with your machine."

Roddie knew nothing about the way film stars assign their services. The business sounded wild, but so were many things in Hollywood.

"Frezza?" he questioned, hoarsely.

"That's where we're going. You, me, two others. Oh, you darling. Roddie, I knew you'd help me."

This time she kissed him clingingly, and he knew then that there was nothing he would not do for her. "When—when do you want to start?" he whispered. She was back, that was all he cared.

On the point of answering she suddenly stiffened, holding up a tensely warning finger. Roddie listened, but he heard nothing.

"I'm sure I heard a board creak in the corridor outside. I'm so scared——"

Silently he opened the outer door, peering out through the crack. The corridor was empty. Closing the door he turned back.

"No one," he said.

The girl looked relieved. "Hurry!" she urged. "Get some clothes on and slip down to the aerodrome and get your machine ready. Don't let anyone see you, and don't talk."

"Anyone see me?" he questioned, puzzled. "Why——"

"The passport people might make trouble. Oh, this means such a lot to me. Roddie. Don't stand and argue. How long will it take you to have everything ready for the trip?"

"The machine's ready for a two-hundred-mile flight now. Only wants running out and warming. Half an hour will be plenty."

She nodded. "I'll wait here. Dress."

In less than five minutes he was closing the door of his suite behind them as they trod noiselessly down the corridor. The hotel lights were sparse, the stairs and landings wrapt in that sinister, gloomy silence that falls over theatres, clubs

ballrooms and places when the crowds that throng them are gone. Roddie's heart was beating strongly at the thought of his fight with this girl. For a man who has been bred to envisage only the inevitable the improbability of this adventure thrilled him as the fulfilment of his dreams. Vana was the sort of girl anything could happen to.

In the shadows of the second landing as they tiptoed side by side across the lift-shaft towards the next flight of stairs the sudden and silent opening of a door brought him up sharply. From out of the shadows a man moved swiftly, drawing a stifled cry from Vana as he caught her wrist. "Come on in," he shot at her. "Things have gone phoney. We've got to think."

Roddie jumped forward as the man drew the girl away, chin jutting dangerously. "Look here!" Roddie threatened, swinging the other round roughly by the shoulder. "I'm not—"

From somewhere a long black streak seemed to fly out at Roddie. A crash of fire shot through his head, and the last thing he could grasp was the carpet sweeping drunkenly up at him.

WHEN he came to he found he was bound at the ankles. His wrists were free. His head was throbbing, but his mind was quite clear. With a start he realized that the mass at his side was the General, bound hand and foot and with his grey face half hidden in a scarf that gagged him. The floor was concrete under him and looking warily round he saw that he was in one of the sheds on the aerodrome. Not far away was his Morane-Pelisier, and he decided that it was the growl of her radial engine starting up that had brought him round.

By the light of the instrument panel he made out a man in the cabin unshipping a seat. A second man, gun in hand, was waiting to receive the seat as the other passed it through the open cabin door. Standing by the nacelle of the Morane was a mechanic, Jean. He was covered by the gun.

Working up to a sitting posture, Roddie cleared his throat. "What the blazes are you doing with my machine?" he shouted.

His voice must have carried above the growl of the engine, for the man in the machine jumped out and ran over to where he and the General lay. "Shut your gab," he growled, "and get up. We're starting, and you're piloting this machine."

At close quarters Roddie recognized the Spaniard by the scar on his cheek. "I'm not taking orders from anyone," he said.

An ugly look jumped into the Spaniard's eyes. Stepping closer, he drove his boot with all his force into Roddie's ribs. "You're taking them from me. Get moving."

Gasping from the pain of that kick Roddie struggled up and tugged at the cords binding his ankles. He found the muzzle of an automatic thrust in his side as he kicked his feet free. "Take the General over to the machine," he was ordered, and levering the old man up on his shoulder Roddie carried him across the concrete to where the other man was covering Jean the mechanic. He removed the gag and propped the General standing against the side of the plane.

The two men were talking now, their heads close, beyond the clawing propeller. Roddie wondered, boiling with rage, how they had got him from the hotel, how they had pirated his 'plane. Then suddenly he remembered Vana, and his heart contracted. Where was she?

"Don't do it!" whispered a voice urgently, at his side, and he turned his head to catch the warning glance of the General. There was something compelling about the old man that made him abandon without second thought his impulse to charge that group.

"These men are dangerous," the General whispered. "Don't take any risks—yet. They tried to get me with a trick in Cannes this evening. They've got me now. But

*Working up to a sitting posture, Roddie cleared his throat. "What the blazes are you doing with my machine?" he shouted.*

I'm not back in Russ- yet, and sti- a few hundred miles from a firing sc-ad.

"They're—they're trying to take you back to Russia?

"They've been trying for a good many years. Tch!" His voice dropped still lower. "Trouble with the mechanic."

Roddie was conscious that they had been kept covered while the two men talked. Now the Spaniard had returned to confront them, while the other man backed a few steps away from Jean, who stood watching him, hands over his head, and with something like panic in his eyes. Suddenly a cry broke from the mechanic's lips as he saw what was going to happen; but a stabbing report from the automatic stopped the torrent of words on his lips. Roddie saw his body jerk back as if from a blow, swivel round, and crumple to the concrete.

While the killer went across to drag the body out of sight among the oil-drums, the man with the scar roused Roddie with a jerk of his gun. "Put him inside and get in yourself."

Roddie's eyes were flaming as he faced the gunman. He did not move.

"Put me inside," came the General's voice, quietly. "Then get in yourself."

Like a man in a dream Roddie obeyed. The two men followed him into the cabin, sitting behind him, with the General lying out of sight on the floor. "You saw what happened to the mechanic," a voice warned. "Just do what you're told or you'll get it. Straight through the backbone. See?"

He inclined his head. "Want me to take her off?"

"Take her off and to hell with the aerodrome people."

Taxi-ing out on to the field to circle up into the wind, he suddenly became aware that the floods had been switched on by the control tower. Almost immediately the siren began to howl the "Keep-off" signal. Against the flood he could see figures running. The club aerodrome—which was run by the hotel—carried no night lighting, shutting down, except for special orders, when the last of the members' or service machines was in for the day. Someone had called out the night staff.

"Step on it!" someone yelled in Roddie's ear. "*Get going!*" And as he opened the throttle to give the machine legs, he felt the muzzle of a gun pressed into his ear. He pulled the machine up over the poplars and across the coast road, taking a heavy bump as he crossed the sea-line. With the lights of the town far below, the muzzle shifted from his ear. "Follow the coastline until I tell you to cut south-east for the Italian shore," the Spaniard shouted. "We ought to make Fiezza in just over an hour. If you try any tricks you're for it. I can handle a machine myself."

There was a sick feeling he could not get rid of inside Roddie. He could not forget the look in Jean's eyes. Things like that couldn't happen in England. The sight of men shot down in cold blood had not entered into his idea of things as they should be, in the rough. He felt that a drink would have done him a lot of good.

A thin moon was showing in a silver drift of clouds as he droned through the mists keeping a level course along the coast. The distant line of foothills lay under his left wing, bleached in the moonlight. Against them at intervals pinpoints of light clustered marking the towns, villas, big hotels. A few hundred feet below his undercarriage, a giant shadow of the machine kept pace with them, sliding over the surface of the sea. That shadow gave him a wild idea.

"What's to prevent me holding firm on to this stick," he shouted, "when you shoot me? You'd never pull me off in time to save the ship hitting the sea."

The man at the back laughed. "You haven't the nerve, that's all. Why don't you try it?"

Roddie felt the pressure of a gun pressed into his spine under the shoulder blades, and hot anger reddened his cheeks. He was no coward, but the business called for a nerve of steel.

"Stalling, eh?" the other sneered. "I knew you were yellow. Big talk. But yellow."

Roddie's fingers bunched, and the blood sang in his head. "*All right!*" he yelled, and jammed down the nose. "Shoot and—"

"*Stop!*" The General's voice sounded clear above the drone of the engine from where he lay at the back.

Just not very Roddie obeyed, flattening out from his power dive to skim the surface of the sea.

"These men are not going to harm you," the General cut in tersely. "You're here because someone has to fly the machine back to cover up the—the visit. They're not doing anything to me. They're paid to get me back to Russia alive. I don't want to die yet. Take them to Italy."

WHEN the grey promontory marked by the lights of St. Gilat jutted out beneath them, Roddie felt a tap on his shoulder. "Turn south-east," a voice said. "You'll see the lights at Fiezza ten miles away."

He swung his ship over. High above them he made out a fast military machine heading for Italy, too, her wing tip lights twinkling against the drift of cloud. He was thinking of Vana, wondering what had happened to her. He picked up the lights of Fiezza to the south some minutes later, and headed past the islands, but the Spaniard stopped him before he reached the town and the aerodrome beyond. Cutting inland over the hills he pointed out a field adjoining a large white house. A large estate and isolated. Roddie knew then how they had laid their plans. The headlamps of a car cut on and off as he circled low over the field in the moonlight, then as he came in for his landing they blazed steadily down the field. He made a good landing, taxi-ing up to the car.

Almost before the machine had stopped, the Spaniard was out on the grass. He signed Roddie out, too, with his gun. The other man was dragging the General out feet first when a voice cut in on the group.

"Don't move!" it said.

Stiffening, Roddie found a rifle pressed into his side by a gendarme in a three-cornered hat. Armed police and officials had surrounded them. As he stared round at the grim circle, streaked with high lights

from the head lamps of the car, Roddie felt suddenly rather sick. It was dawning on him that he had had just about enough of this life where you do not know what is going to happen next.

He was hustled with the others into the car and during the journey down the hill he sat in silence between two gendarmes. In a little whitewashed room at the police headquarters in Fiezza they sat him on a bench beside the General, warning them not to talk. On the other side of the room were the Spaniard and the man who had killed the mechanic. Certainly no one had smoothed all this business out beforehand for him. He had to acknowledge he was mixed up in a murder, and he was not sure yet what else besides.

The General's face was a mask, as he stared straight before him. As the minutes passed, Roddie wondered bleakly what next. Then the door opened and someone spoke in rapid Italian. A woman—two women—entered the room, and he pushed incredulously to his feet as he recognized his mother and Ann.

'That's my son," Lady Chatcombe said. And that is General Kroubetskoi."

IN the hall of the Hotel Ritz-Palermo, in the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele at Fiezza, Roddie Chatcombe placed a chair for his mother as she slipped out of her furs, then sat down himself. 'The General brought Ann along from that awful police barracks," Lady Chatcombe told him. "I sent her straight to bed.'

I wouldn't mind knowing what happened," he said.

You'll have to ask Ann. She knows more about it than I do. I've hardly had time to think yet.' She tasted the steaming cup of coffee. "You're a bit of a responsibility to a conscientious mother, Rod. Ann was in my room at the early hours of this morning, shaking the life out of—of someone at the side of my bed.'

Something in the way she avoided his eyes told Roddie. 'Vana."

Yes, Rod." She looked across at him, quickly. "Don't take it hard, Roddie! You'll get over it in—

I'm all right, mother.

It seems Ann saw them knock you down, but when she got to that room where Vana and the man dragged you the door was locked. Vana came out again just as Ann was going off to rouse the management."

"And she brought her along—to you?'

We both had an interest in you, Rod—and it was a wise move."

"What was Ann doing at two in the morning, round the hotel?"

I didn't ask her. Maybe anxious about you. Girls have done queerer things than keep an eye on a young man who spends the night pacing about a hotel waiting for another woman. I thought Ann was going to kill her. So did that woman.' A remote look had come into Lady Chatcombe's fine eyes. 'She talked to us. It wasn't fear of the police, it was Ann she was scared of. They had been paying her to get hold of the General. She'd been trying for weeks, but the General was suspicious. She wanted money, it seems, tried to trap the old man in Cannes that—yesterday afternoon. Anyway she told us where they were taking you, and the manager let her go to avoid scandal. When they found that—that man in the sheds, it meant the police after all, and they telephoned to Fiezza.'

'And you and Ann?' He was not looking at her.

"We thought we might as well see the thing through when we heard they were sending a machine after you."

'You passed us. I saw your machine over St Glat." Things had been happening so rapidly he wanted time to think. Something in his mother's manner made him feel a small boy, yet a hero too. 'I don't know where I am, or what I'm doing," he said. "You must have had a terrible time, mother. You and Ann—

She smiled at him then, as sometimes—if you are lucky you see a mother smile.

Ann's a girl in a million, Rod," she said. Your own class."

# THE ART OF

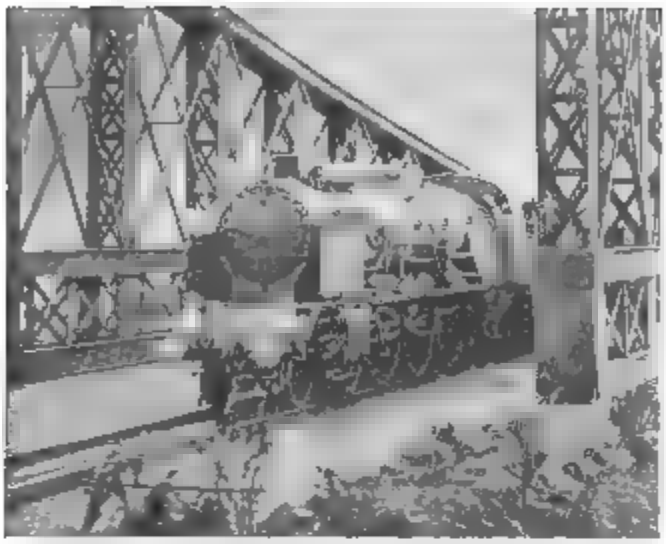
## ... Secrets of the Film Studios

THE art of illusion on a colossal scale was first brought into practice when Hollywood discovered that it really was easier, less expensive, and far more satisfactory to build, say, a replica of the Doge's Palace at Venice in a local studio than to send over a complete company, including directors, property men, camera men, and a large cast, to "shoot" the required scenes on the spot.

But this system of building full-sized backgrounds in the studio did not last for long. That also was too expensive and, besides, the space available could not accommodate anything so vast as, say, a complete Norman keep. So there was invented the system whereby a model of the building required as a background was built to an exact scale—as a rule six to ten feet in width, perfect in proportion and complete in detail. That model was usually placed some feet above the level of the floor of the studio. The members of the cast who had to play their parts against this background then took their places on the floor. It seems incredible that human figures so grouped should, when filmed, have appeared to blend in proper proportion into a natural background, but so it was.

It is useless to go into technical details, which it would be difficult to make clear. It must just be roughly recognized that this illusion was produced by employing special lenses to photograph the scene as it was reflected in scientifically adjusted mirrors. Thus might Henry VIII converse with Cardinal Wolsey against a six-foot model of the courtyard at Hampton Court.

This was a notable invention, but now they have done better than that. The model building, if it was to convey complete realism, was a highly expensive business. Sometimes it would employ architects, engineers, designers, and craftsmen for months. So, necessity being the mother of invention, there was born the great discovery



*On the screen the Rome Express looked exactly like a real train at full speed, but it was only a small scale model which is seen being built in the photograph on the left-hand page*

# ILLUSION

described by **W. HOLT WHITE**

that is technically known as "back projection." This discovery, apart from the synchronization of sound with movement, is perhaps the greatest achievement in film production up to date.

In effect it is this. Instead of designing immensely intricate models, the director can send a camera man to obtain the background he needs in any part of the world - a monastery in Thibet, a bazaar at Algiers, the Boulevards of Paris, the Polar regions, or the South Sea Islands. And when the camera man returns, his film background is utilized in the same way as the model was originally employed.

To show how this system works, we are taking in this article a simple method of illustration. In a scene from the film, "Love and Let Live," Gene Gerrard had to show how his sudden interest in a fellow-passenger of a water-taxi proceeding down the Thames resulted in dire disaster. Now, in order that the movements of the passengers in the water-taxi should be clear and sharp and that their conversation should be audible, the actual happenings in the water-taxi had to be filmed in the studio at Elstree, but it was necessary to the story that the water-taxi should be seen making its dashing way down Thames.

To begin with, therefore, a camera in the stern of a motor launch on a rapid trip from Chelsea to the Pool photographed the wash from the launch and the buildings on the bank of the river as the craft sped by. What was taken on that trip is shown in one of the illustrations.

Next, a duplicate of the launch was placed in one of the studios. If you study the photograph concerned you will note the disposition of the occupants of the launch and you will observe the camera man, and also the figure of a man at the bow of the boat. He is there to rock the boat on its cunningly devised staging. At the stern of the launch is a film screen. At the back of the screen, unobservable in the photograph, is a projector which throws on to the screen the panorama of the river which has previously been taken. It is the "back projected" film which serves as the background to the scene in the studio which is being filmed from the front.

The scene proceeds. The camera man proper gets to work, with the result that when the picture is completed the launch in the studio appears to be streaking down the river, yet the actors appear distinct against the river's more or less blurred background, while by the adjustment of the sound-recording instruments every word they utter is clear.

Such is "back projection," which has revolutionized the making of films.

At this point it is necessary to make a

*The actors are in a dummy motor-boat, but the correct scenic effect is obtained by projecting on to the screen behind them a panorama of the river previously taken.*

digression in order to describe another masterly piece of illusion practised in this same film. Having his vision obscured by a newspaper, the driver of the water-taxi crashes into a bridge. When the film is run you see the pier of a bridge loom up. Then *crash!* You can hear it like a clap of thunder. A fraction of a second later, without any halt in the picture, you see the occupants of the motor-boat apparently floundering hopelessly in the Thames. All that has happened is that the camera man has shut down on this river scene. Then, after an interval of a day or so, the next section of the picture is finished in a shallow tank at Elstree.

But we must return from this short digression concerning the tank to the illusion of back projection. Most picturegoers are familiar with the shot which shows figures silhouetted against the sky on the dizzy heights of a scaffolding at the top of a super-skyscraper. Below lie other sky-scrapers—the real sky-scrapers of New York introduced by "back projection."

Suddenly, as the result of a fight or an accident, one of the silhouetted figures falls from the dizzy platform. Down and down he goes. But this is only a dummy. The real actor who, of course, is merely on a staging in the studio, has fallen perhaps a couple of feet, where he lies awaiting the thud which is to announce his theoretical demise.

And now we come to the extraordinarily interesting problems encountered in the filming of falling bodies.

In one production the famous Emil Jannings took the part of an acrobat who had to plunge from an aerial trapeze into a net sixty feet below. The dramatic dive had to be filmed from start to finish in such a way as to secure a "close up"

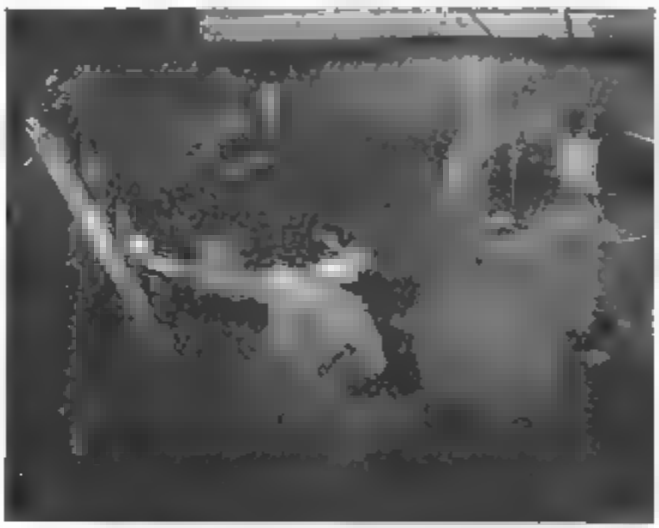
*On the film it looks just like a scene in war-time France, but our photograph shows that in reality the trench is in a pleasant English countryside.*

of the falling man throughout the whole of his descent. To ensure this it was necessary that the camera should descend on a level with the man and therefore at exactly the same speed.

To achieve this particularly difficult piece of photography, an automatically working camera was fixed in the grooves of a perpendicular chute. It was to be so weighted that it would fall level with the man.

But at what speed would the man fall? Needless to say that it was not intended that Jannings should perform the feat himself. He was "doubled" in the part by an experienced trapeze artist. Before however this artist took the plunge, a dummy of the same weight as himself was dropped from the aerial trapeze into the net below to ascertain the speed at which the camera would have to travel downwards.

But dynamics were brought to nought. For some reason inexplicable in science, the dummy refused to fall twice at the same rate. Finally the trapeze artist had to plunge into the net over a hundred times before the weights on the camera were so adjusted as to ensure complete synchronization with the man. A wonderful piece of work, and so deftly staged that the public never even suspected that it was not Jannings who made the descent.



*Camera, camera-men, and lights all shared a bath with Harry Kendall, the principal player, in a studio tank when filming a few "drowning episodes"*

And now we come to a far more complicated piece of illusion which has undoubtedly proved a triumph for a British film. It relates to the drama of "The Rome Express," the principle feature of which is its roaring, roaring train. The train, as it is seen in the station at Paris, was built full size in the Gaumont Studios at Shepherd's Bush; but the train as it is shown at the thrilling moment when it is speeding across a viaduct, was but a small model built in the basement of the studios.

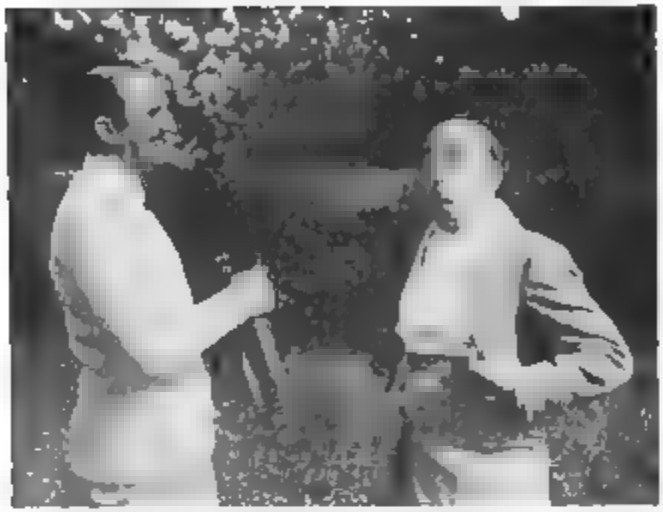
The photograph in which the men are seen working on it reveals its true size. The other photograph shows it as, thanks to the craft of the camera man, it appeared on the screen; and no one could think that it was not the "real thing." Even the sky appears real. If, however, you contrast the photographs, you will see how inadequate to produce the desired effect was the actual sky of London overhead as compared to the sunlit clouds over the engine in the finished picture. That sunlit sky was provided by a painted back-cloth, the sunshine by sun arcs to amplify the daylight. Furthermore, this train passed with a rattle and a roar over the sleepers which conveyed entirely satisfactory and realistic noises to subsequent delighted audiences. But these noises were only achieved by infinite pains.

Sound-track camera men—the men who photograph noises—spent days on a real railway line registering the sound of wheels on rails, the sound made by the emission of steam, and the whistling of engines. All these sounds had to be taken back to the studio, modified or accentuated, and then what is known as "married" to the picture.

As a result no one could imagine that the film of the panting, racketing, roaring, whistling little model did not represent the real thing.

Thus the work of illusion goes on. And if you could only make a short tour of the principal British film studios, you would realize to what an extent it is practised.

Take, for instance, Elstree. Elstree, which



*A little artificial perspiration. Tom Walls spraying an actor who was supposed to have exerted himself tremendously while running in a race*

has been called "Hollywood in Hertfordshire." On one side of the vast studios is a street in Shanghai—a street so complete in every detail that even a Chinese would find it hard to believe that he was not at home. Just beyond is a trench built for a war film. In the photograph which illustrates this article the pleasant hills of Hertfordshire stretch just behind. In the film you cannot tell that trench from the real grim thing. Hard by is a bridge which spans an ordinarily waterless river. What tragedies and what comedies have not been enacted on that bridge—that bridge which is basically always the same, yet so utterly different in every picture.

Or take the tank already mentioned. In another photograph is to be seen a cameraman, well above his waist in water at work with the assistance of lights. In the foreground is Harry Kendall of "Flying Fool" fame, also up to his waist in water about to take part in "drowning episodes. Illusion—always illusion!"

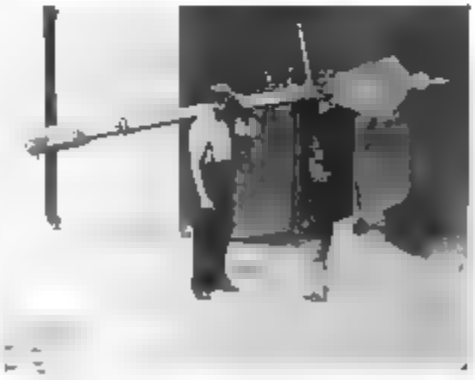
Now let us go to Ealing. There stands a mighty building—a tenement block towering ninety feet high, and built of brick and concrete. It looks strong enough to withstand a minor bombardment. Step round it. At the back, lath, plaster, and wooden struts. It is just the biggest "set" ever built.

But it is not always the dimensions of the illusion which make it so intriguing. Many of the smaller ones are marvels of delicate scheming: scheming in which the art director, the sound engineer, the property master, the plasterer and the carpenter all practise their subtle crafts. And the apotheosis of these crafts may be found at the Gaumont British Studios at Shepherd's Bush.

There is a call for marble pillars. They rise, beautifully fashioned in wood. Then the marble "mason" takes a brush which he dips into a mixture of oil and water. That mixture he spreads on sheets of paper. And just because oil and water will never mix, so, when the paper has dried, it gives an absolutely perfect representation of marble. Its veining cannot be detected from the genuine thing. The paper is pasted round the woodwork and the marble pillars are complete.

To the carpenter also falls such jobs as making fire-alarms and lamp-posts. They look solid enough on the screen, but that is also only illusion. You will see in one of the photographs with what ease a workman can shoulder a film lamp-post complete with lamp.

Every filmgoer appreciates how beautiful to-day are many of the settings. For this



*It does not require a professional strong man to shoulder a film lamp-post. They are made by the studio carpenter*

the plasterer has largely to be thanked When it comes to fashioning all the replicas of old wrought-iron gates, armorial bearings, balustrades, statuettes, and the like his craft almost soars into the realms of art It is the plasterer too, who must often be thanked for the glimpses of the beautiful cornices which sometimes you see suggesting the roof of a room. There cannot, of course, be a roof because the "set" must be lit from above. The plasterer, or the builder or the carpenter may have suggested to you that you see a roof, but they are only presenting you with yet another illusion.

It is the plasterer again who frequently deludes you into the belief that you are gazing at massive stone or brickwork Brick walls are made by the mile in thin strips

But the real centre of the practical side of illusion is in the property room. There, very often for sixteen hours a day the property master sits in the midst of constant disturbances and interruptions, trying to solve the conundrums sent down to him by the producer or the art director. Once I watched him toying with a good-sized plaice. It was plastic and damp, and even at close quarters, I thought the fish was genuine. But it was not It was made of gelatine, and the property master was scheming the manufacture of hundreds of similar fish for the stocking of a fish shop

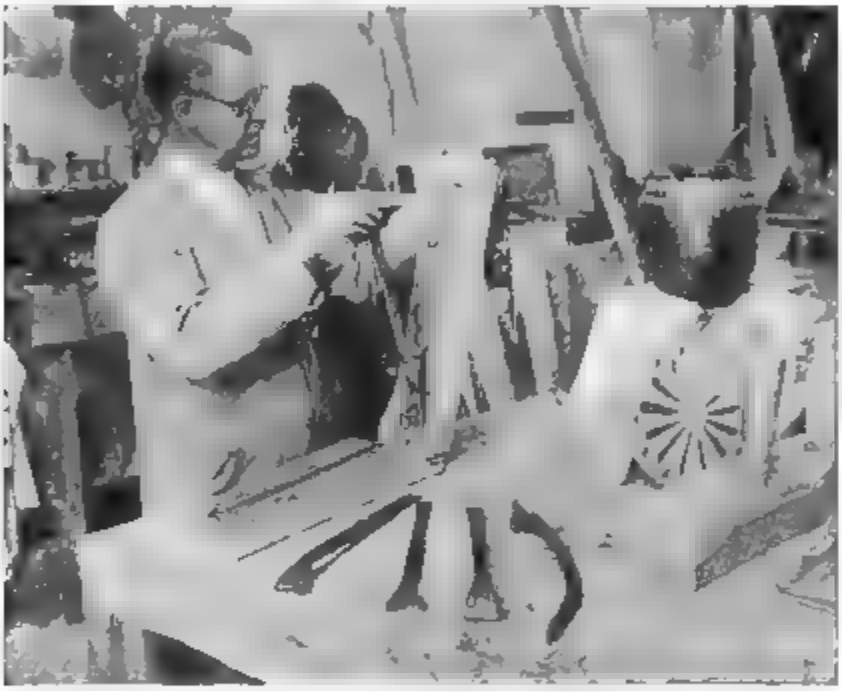
A week before, his problem had been to furnish a State Library with books. A great number of these books had to be genuine, inasmuch as the story called for their removal from the shelves Together with the art director he went to survey the space to be filled

"How many books do you suppose we want?" asked the art director

The property master considered the space with a practised eye. "One ton," he said, briefly

So he got on the telephone to a famous second-hand bookshop and ordered one ton of books. The rest of the space he filled in with plaster dummies When I inspected the "set," it was impossible to detect the genuine books from the illusory ones.

Or take weapons. Weapons of offence



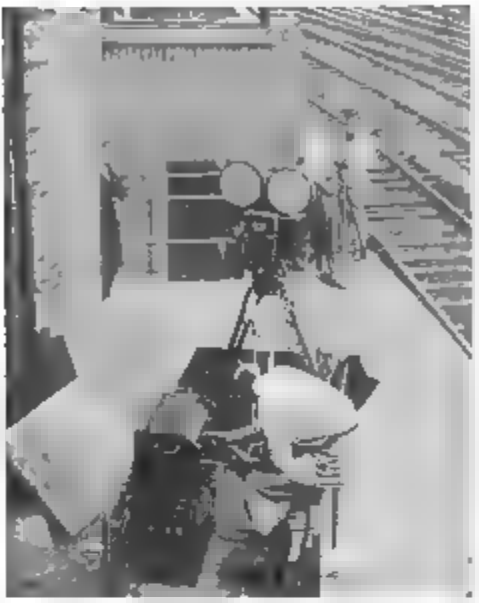
*A craftsman moulding papier mâché jemmies guaranteed to crumble pleasantly when a victim is dealt a murderous blow on the head.*

are frequently required in films. It may happen that a policeman has to deal a blow with a truncheon. The blow looks effective but it does no damage. That problem has been solved by the introduction of what is known as Bonsall's Wood. It is, in reality, a South American fungus, so astonishingly light that a film policeman can deal the heaviest of blows with a truncheon of this wood without leaving the slightest mark.

There is also a brisk demand for jemmies, jemmies with which the murderously-inclined burglar can leave his victim lying for dead. But the dealing in a picture of a blow which might well make you shudder need cause you no real apprehension. Made of papier mâché, these jemmies are, as the cooks say, 'hotted up' before use, and when nicely heated they crumble pleasantly on the head which receives their attention. Not that you can see them crumble in the picture. It is just part of the illusion.

Champagne bottles are also frequently employed as weapons in "rough house" scenes. Every filmgoer at one time or another must have seen them splintering on innocent heads. They splinter beautifully and harmlessly, being fashioned of the finest wax.

Then food. Film millionaires have a habit of eating grilled sole for breakfast. But as the millionaire must actually eat the fish, and perhaps eat seven fish before the director is fully satisfied, it would be extravagant, even in the film business, for the millionaire to consume seven genuine soles. So the soles, all brown and smoking hot, appear one after another, as though by magic, from the property master's kitchen. They are made of thin light pastry, and there are



*Sound-track men spent days recording real railway noises—the sounds of wheels, whistles, and escaping steam—which were later "married" to the photographs of the model Rome Express.*

film stars who have complained that a surfeit of these, insisted on by an adamant director, has not been conducive to slimming.

There is practically no "gadget" which is not called into use in the pursuit of producing illusions. Take sprays. In one production when Robertson Hare had to run in a race it was incumbent upon him to perspire profusely. He could not perspire. So in the photograph you see Tom Walls spraying him with a solution which produces the illusion of perspiration.

But the finest piece of spray work I have ever seen—perhaps the most inexplicable and eerie example of the illusionist's magic that I have ever witnessed—was in the studios at Shepherd's Bush. They wanted cobwebs, masses of cobwebs. The problem was how to produce them. Finally an Italian plasterer invented a spray which looks uncommonly like the apparatus the hairdresser uses for a face massage. Into this spray he put a solution which is still his own secret. Nothing appears to emanate from it, but wherever he blows the invisible stream there, instantly grow cobwebs—cobwebs exactly as spiders weave them. It is uncanny to watch these cobwebs grow and grow under the invisible jet of this scientific sorcerer.

The art of illusion indeed is developing at such a rate that it is difficult to say what may come next.

To those however who may be lucky enough to visit a film studio there may be given a word of advice. Don't take hold of anything, don't sit down on anything until you are satisfied that it is real. The railing may crumble in your hand or the chair collapse beneath you. And it is better to be a happy victim of illusion than a damaged one.

# DOUBLE DEALING

THE Double Idea in Literature is older than the two Dromios. All the same, is it a justifiable peg to hang a story on? Can two men be so like one another as to be mistaken one for the other by acquaintances and after the first glance?

César Francke, the famous Paris detective, when I met him last autumn gave me the facts about the case of M. Werner. I can only say that these facts presenting the old idea in such a new guise are, in my opinion, well worth recounting.

I give them in the form of a story told in my own words and in my own way.

In the year 1927 Messrs. Bostang and Werner carried on business as diamond merchants in the Rue d'Anjou. Their offices were situated on the upper floor of No. 10 Bis and the stones they dealt in came nearly all of them from the great Amsterdam house of Kreler.

The present Bostang, a man of sixty-five or so, had in 1919 taken on as partner a relation, Adam Werner. Werner receiving one-fifth of the net takings and a half share of any profit from business specially introduced by him.

Werner in 1927 was a man of forty, unmarried, a jovial and friendly individual inhabiting a flat in the Rue Coq Héron and giving a good deal of time to pleasure when not engaged in business.

One bright morning M. Werner left his home at about eleven o'clock, took an auto-taxi and drove to the Rue de la Paix where he entered the shop of M. Goldsak, the art dealer.

Goldsak was in the shop, in fact, he was holding up a piece of brocade to the light, and seeing Werner he dropped the business in hand and turned to him.

"I have called," said Werner, "about this letter I received from you this morning concerning a celadon vase."

"Ah," said Goldsak, "the celadon vase—yes, monsieur?"

"*What* celadon vase, M. Goldsak?"

"Why the vase monsieur took away last week on approbation."

"But, M. Goldsak," said Werner, "I know nothing of such a vase."

"But surely, surely, M. Werner," said Goldsak, "surely you cannot have forgotten that you called here, admired the vase and took it away with you, saying you would let me have a decision about it next day. Then time went on and I wrote yesterday for your decision."

"M. Goldsak," said Werner, "I know absolutely nothing about this business. I did not call upon you nor did I take a vase away from here. When I got your letter this morning I did not know in the least to what it referred."

Goldsak stared at the other with mouth open. Then he called an assistant.

"Yes," said the assistant, "I quite remember. I packed the vase for you, monsieur, and carried it to your auto-taxi which was waiting."

This confirmation hit Werner strangely. He took a seat on a chair near by and sat for a moment head forward and brooding. Then he turned to Goldsak.

"How much was this vase worth?"

"Five hundred francs, monsieur," replied the art dealer.

"Now tell me, M. Goldsak, would you swear that the person that called was myself?"

"Absolutely, monsieur."

"Yet I did not call. I know absolutely nothing of this business."

M. Goldsak made a gesture.

"I know," said Werner. "Still the fact remains, a very unpleasant fact for me as well as for you, M. Goldsak.

"There are only two things possible: either a man exactly like myself got the vase from you, impersonating me, or I did so myself unknown to myself. What day was it and what hour?"

"Last Tuesday, M. Werner, and before noon, about half-past eleven, I should think."

H. de Vere STACPOOLE

*Illustrated by* H. J. DAWSON

Copyright, 1928, by H. de Vere Stacpoole

That leaves me at fault said Werner [illegible] generally finish my work there about eleven Then I go for a stroll before *déjeuner* general y along the boulevards or the quays, I am interested in old books That is, when the weather is fine— t has been fine for the last fortnight So you see I cannot say I was here or there, at the time you mention, last Tuesday, for I cannot remember what I was doing in that way six days ago, ndeed I would be hard set to remember the trifling events of the day before yesterday Well, M. Goldsak, it is not your fault that either my mind may have made a lapse, or that someone so like me as to be unmistakable has defrauded you by using the likeness therefore I will pay you the five hundred francs, and settle with myself or this gentleman if he exists and ever comes my way '

He took his pocket-book out and handed five hundred francs to the dealer

That afternoon M Werner called upon Dr Petit the brain specialist in the Place Vendôme He described [illegible]

Dr Petit a bald headed old gentleman in gold spectacles, examined his reflexes his pupils the fundus of his eyes [illegible] blood pressure [illegible] ascertained that no business or family troubles had been worrying him that his appetite was normal and that his sleep was natural and undisturbed by nightmare

Then he said, "One cannot speak with certainty on anything in this world, but with almost certainty I can say (and this, mind you, is only my opinion) that you have not been suffering from that condition which we may call the revelation of a dual personality"

"Thank goodness," said M Werner. "It

*"The parcels are gone," cried Werner, starting up "The Amsterdam parcel and the other — do you know anything of it?"*

is bad enough to have this thing occur but it is worse to feel that one may have no control of one's actions"

Petit smiled

I would not trouble myself at all about that' said he. 'Between you and me, that sort of thing was useful to Charcot and is useful to novelists, but in a complete condition such as would have to be maintained in a case like yours—it does not exist. It is the same with hypnotism: you cannot make a man do what he does not want to do by hypnotism. Go and have a good dinner. My fee is five hundred francs, good day, good day—go and dine well and go and see Joséphine at the Théâtre de Paris she will make you laugh—she is one of my prescriptions.'

M. Werner on leaving Dr. Petit drove to the Préfecture of Police, where he found and had an interview with Casar Francke, a small dark man whose eyes, without impertinence or the effect of staring, seem never to leave one, in conversation.

He told him everything.

Francke was sympathetic.

'The bother is,' said he, 'that though Dr. Petit is no doubt right, a perfect case in which two individuals are indistinguishable is—I won't say impossible, for that is a big word, but, well, next to it. Unless in the case of twins, you have not a twin brother?'

'No.'

Francke could say no more for the moment.

'You frighten me,' said Werner. 'It's bad enough to think that there is someone capable of doing things in my name and without my knowledge, but it is worse to think that one may have no control of one's mind. You can suggest no course of action?'

'Naturally, no,' said Francke, 'unless to make the thing public and warn people against having any dealings with a gentleman who is the exact image of yourself—and that would be absurd—also not good for you in a business sense.'

He asked to be kept informed if anything of the same nature occurred again, and Werner took his departure.

II

A FORTNIGHT or so later they met by chance in the street where the Préfecture is situated.

'Well, monsieur,' said Francke, 'no more news of our gentleman?'

'Thank goodness, no,' said Werner. 'Don't talk to me of him. I was beginning to forget that business.'

They laughed and passed on, but they met again towards the end of that month, Werner calling at the Préfecture with another tale of woe.

He had gone last evening to dine at the Café de Rome. The manager had not only refused him a table but had requested him to leave, for the reason that two nights before he had dined there, become drunk and acted in a most insulting manner.

'Yes?' said Francke.

'As a matter of fact,' said Werner, 'I did not dine there, nor was I drunk.'

"Where did you dine?'

'At home."

"Can you prove that?"

"Of course. I rent a service flat. If I want a meal it comes up in the lift, my valet Germain takes it from the lift and serves me. The kitchen people can prove I dined at home as well as Germain."

'Then,' said Francke, 'you have a very clear case for heavy damages against the manager of the Café de Rome. Of course that is not my affair. My business is to see the manager and waiters and try to pick up useful details. Who is your lawyer?'

'M. Bontemps.'

'Then see him, and I will let you know if I get any news that may be useful.'

III

THE interview between Werner and the manager of the Café de Rome and their two lawyers, which took place a day or two later, was a painful one for the manager.

After it was over Werner called upon Casar Francke to tell him about it.

"What is he paying in the way of damages?" asked the detective.

'Nothing,' said the other. 'Bontemps wanted to make him pay ten thousand francs, I have accepted an apology instead and my lawyer's costs. He laughed. 'I would only have given the ten thousand francs to a hospital and I am not feeling very charitably inclined just now, besides he has relieved my mind. I can now definitely say that this infernal other self is not a creature born of brain disease but is definitely another man. In this case he played no trick on me, he just went to a café and got drunk and by chance I went there two days later and got the result all the same, it is more than unpleasant. Have you found out anything?'

'No,' said Francke. "You see how difficult the case is. I took it up myself with the manager and the waiters. They could say nothing but simply that a gentleman had come in and behaved badly and that two nights after the same gentleman had come in (that is you) and had been refused a table and created a scene. The first gentleman had not been accompanied

by anyone and had left nothing behind him to identify him If he had left even a handkerchief even a toothpick, there would have been the possibility of a clue. What is there to go on ? '

Yes. I see that," said Werner ' All the same it is very unfortunate, it is like living with an explosive bomb that may go off any time and make one ridiculous or injure one At all events there is some comfort in knowing that the bomb is not in one's own brain, and somehow I think that this person, having disgraced himself like that, may limit his activities—maybe leave Paris.

There was nothing more to be done at the Prefecture so he took his departure, having received the assurance that he would be at once notified if anything turned up

IV

TWO months passed and nothing happened It might have been supposed that Werner was right and that his double had left the capital. But this was not so

On the morning of the first of August M. Werner arrived at the office at his usual time, nine o'clock Bostang, who took things easier and who generally arrived a little before ten, had not yet turned up, and Werner began to deal with the morning letters. This done, he went to the safe to obtain some receipts for reference

Fremin the clerk in the outer office, heard him cry out and came running in Werner was standing staring into the safe Two parcels, one containing a consignment of diamonds arrived the morning before from Amsterdam and the other containing the firm's trade stock, were gone. The value of the two was, approximately a million francs.

Werner clutched at the table for support and then sat down

Now this safe, of vast strength had only two keys; one always in possession of Werner and the other belonging to Bostang It was so constructed that the turning of the lock in ordinary circumstances rang two electric bells, one just outside the office door, the other below stairs where the concierge, an old army man, kept guard The electric communication could be cut off by a hidden switch known only to the partners, so that the safe could be opened and shut in office hours without raising an alarm

To Fremin seeing the condition of things, the thought instantly occurred that Bostang must be responsible, but just at that moment the senior partner entered, calm and unconcerned He stared at Werner sitting helpless and at the open safe

Werner, before he could be questioned, jumped up.

The parcels are gone," said he " The Amsterdam parcel and the other—do you know anything of it ? "

' Gone ! ' cried Bostang ' I ! Nothing When did you find this ?

' Now, just as I opened the safe

' Gone ! Was the safe tampered with ? "

' No. It seemed all right.

The fact that they were insured took the fine edge off the tragedy All the same Bostang, a fat man, was perspiring He stood for a moment, then he said to Fremin :—

' Run and fetch Jacques "

Jacques was the concierge

In a moment Jacques appeared He knew nothing No one had entered On the night before, Bostang had departed first, then Fremin, then Werner, at five o'clock

Then you came back monsieur," said he to Werner ' and went upstairs to fetch some papers you had forgotten , after you had left no one went upstairs '

' But I did not come back cried Werner

' But monsieur, said Jacques, ' excuse me. Half an hour after you had left you came back and went upstairs for some papers. You even talked to me about the weather, then you left again with a parcel. After that no person entered the building to go upstairs

Good God ' cried Werner He stood like a man dazed

Well ? said Bostang, interrogatively

Wait " said Werner He went to the telephone and rang up the Prefecture.

Yes M Francke was in -wait A minute later came Francke's voice. Yes, he would come at once

' What on earth is all this ? ' asked Bostang, annoyed and irritated " What's the meaning of it ? '

" Only that I have been done in again," replied Werner " I see the whole thing, but I can't explain in a few words. I have sent for a man from the Prefecture. Wait till he comes "

He walked about the room talking half to himself, half to the others. " This is nothing it's the general situation life is becoming impossible — Then he went into the outer office to be by himself

Bostang lit a cigar The concierge returned to his office

V

A FEW minutes later Francke appeared, followed by Werner who had met him in the outer office

Before listening to anything but the statement that the diamonds had been

stolen, he examined the safe carefully and the electric alarm device. Then he heard the story and the concierge's statement, Jacques being called up for the purpose, he questioned the clerk. Then dismissing the concierge and clerk he shut the door on himself and the two partners.

Finding that Werner had said nothing to Bostang of the vase and the café incident, wishing naturally enough in the first case not to advertise the possibility of a mental disease and in the second an unpleasantness which had better be forgotten, he gave the senior partner a brief account of these matters and then turned to Werner.

'It is evident at sight,' said he, 'that this man whom we will call Mr. X has done this business, but naturally you will wish to establish the impossibility of your implication in it. In the case of the vase you were unable to establish an alibi and said so and paid the money for it, in the case of the café you were able to do so. Now tell me what happened after you left the office at five o'clock yesterday.'

Werner thought for a moment.

'I walked along the street in the direction of the Rue Paradis. I bought a newspaper from the kiosk there. I had only a five-hundred-franc note on me, so the woman could not give me change, and I had to owe her for the paper—but that is nothing——'

'Excuse me,' said Francke, 'everything is important. Go on.'

'I then walked home and reached my flat a little before half-past five. I told my man to bring me a Dubonnet and sat down, lit a cigar and read the newspaper—the *Echo de Paris*. At six I dressed, and at half-past six about went to dine at the Tour D'Argent.'

'Thanks,' said Francke. 'That is all very clear. I will verify it, of course for your sake, and then get to work. There is one point that may give us a ray of light. The concierge stated that the alarm bell did not ring, therefore this man evidently knew of the secret switch—since the wire was not cut—a secret known only to you and M. Bostang, and of course the electricians who installed it. Who were they and when was it installed?'

Rafitte of the Rue Ste. Honoré, cut in Bostang, 'and it was installed nine months ago.'

'Then there is your clerk.'

'He knew nothing of it,' said Werner.

'One never can tell,' said Francke. 'Well, gentlemen, I will do my best. Keep me informed if anything happens, and I will let you know on my side what goes on.'

He left them.

## VI

FIRST he called at the kiosk in the Rue Paradis. The woman in charge knew M. Werner quite well, he always bought a paper from her, he had only a five-hundred-franc note last night and he owed her for the paper.

'He told me to pay you,' said Francke, laughing.

Then he took a taxi to the Rue Coq-Héron. There were two entrances to the block of flats, by way of the lift and by way of the stairs. The lift was down and Francke asked was M. Werner in.

'I don't know, monsieur,' replied the man. 'M. Werner has never used the lift since coming here, he is afraid of lifts.'

This was unfortunate for Werner, as the man's evidence would have been useful.

'But,' said Francke, 'you would surely see if he came in by way of the stairs.'

'No, monsieur, the stair entrance as you will perceive is just out of my sight when on duty.'

This was so.

'Take me up,' said Francke.

The door of the flat was opened by the servant Germain, a typical valet of the old mutton-chop whiskered order.

Francke was quite plain with him, showed him the police card, at sight of which the man became all civility and told him he had come to make some inquiries about his master.

'At what time did M. Werner come home yesterday evening?'

Germain thought for a moment.

'About half past five, monsieur.'

'Was he carrying a parcel?'

'No, monsieur.'

'A newspaper?'

Germain could not remember.

'What happened after he came in?'

The man seemed puzzled, nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

'Did he tell you to get him anything?'

'Why, yes, a Dubonnet.'

'At what time did he go out to dinner?'

'Before seven.'

'Half-past six?'

'Yes, somewhere about that time.'

'How long have you been in his service, M. Germain?'

'Two years, monsieur.'

'Before living at this flat where did he reside and how long before you came here?'

'He lived at the Hotel Maysonette and we came here six months ago, monsieur, we were eighteen months in the Hotel Maysonette. In fact I was hired there.'

'Thanks,' said Francke.

He left the building and called at the Hotel Maysonette, then he came back to the Prefecture, where, taking pen and ink,

*"You are exactly right," said Francke "I heard of Germain's death just now, and that is why I sent for you."*

he drew up a list of inquiries to be made, and sent for M Bernstein

Now one of the surprising things about the Paris Sûreté is the youthfulness of many of its most important agents Bernstein, an Alsatian, looked like a gigolo young rather pasty faced, snub-nosed and Marcelled. Seeing him in the streets or a restaurant you would never have attached this terrible man to his job, for once set upon you. Bernstein not only found out all about you, but, till called off, became your unseen familiar

Having wound up Bernstein and set him going, Francke went off to *déjeuner*

## VII

TWO days later the firm of Bostang and Werner had their interview with the insurance company

Nothing had transpired meanwhile and at the interview the whole position was set out as we know it by the lawyers of the firm

It appeared that the loss was almost entirely that of M Bostang Werner, the working partner, had very little money in the business, brains were his contribution This also was set out, together with the unfortunate position of the junior partner in relation to the man who had impersonated him, a relationship attested to by the police evidence

The meeting lasted two hours, and if you know anything about French business methods, or if you ever had business transactions with French business men, you will understand that in those two hours little advance was made

But two things began to appear Firstly the claim in the end would have to be settled and secondly no insurance henceforward could be undertaken whilst Werner was a partner of the firm

That was self-evident and no reflection on the *bona fides* of the gentleman He had simply become a danger to financial navigation in a manner of speaking and though he might be pitied just as a typhoid carrier is pitied, he was to be avoided at all costs

What can one say for a man with an *alter ego* in the form of a scoundrel capable of the theft of a million francs worth of diamonds ?

Werner could not but see this indeed he said so, turning rather bitterly on Francke, who was also present at the meeting as though the detective had not done all in his power with the slender evidence at his command. He was almost rude in fact, till seeing the wrongness of the position he apologized

But Francke understood and only smiled

'I have done my best M Werner, said he, ' and I shall continue to do so, and somehow I have a feeling that some day I will be able to put my hand on this man

## VIII

TWO months passed

All sorts of things happened in Paris and the police were if anything busier than usual owing to a big strike affecting the metal workers, and general labour unrest One might have fancied the Werner affair forgotten or at least pigeon-holed with other insoluble crimes, but that open eye which is printed on the police card which every officer carries with the words Surveillance Sûreté is more than an artistic concept

One night Bernstein appeared in Chief Francke's room

Well said Francke, who was busy over some papers, what is it ?

Germain the valet of M Werner died last night ' said Bernstein

Francke bit the end of his pen For the last two months the major doings of M Werner had been followed and noted at his direction

Ah, said he, Germain died last night did he ? What doctor attended him ?

Dr Posset of the Rue Mirabeau

Well said Francke, go yourself and see Posset and bring him here "

Quarter of an hour later the doctor arrived accompanied by Bernstein Germain had been unwell some time ago with slight pain and sickness Posset had attended him and had diagnosed ulceration of the stomach Yesterday he had been called in a hurry, only to find the patient dead. He had given a certificate of death which, in his opinion, was caused by collapse following the perforation of a blood vessel of the stomach by the ulcer

Posset was a dodderer over seventy and a bit deaf

Thank you doctor said Francke. All the same, and without disputing your diagnosis, I am going to have a post-mortem made by our surgeon, M Leverrier You will please not speak of this case to anyone until you hear from me

Posset gone, Francke turned to Bernstein

Go at once and arrest this man Werner said he. and bring him here. It need not be a formal arrest. Just say I have news for him about the case. All the same he may either attempt suicide or attack you we are dealing with a terrible criminal so be on your guard

Bernstein turned and left the room

## IX

HALF an hour later Werner appeared followed by Bernstein who closed the door Werner looked quite calm and collected

" Ah good day, M Werner,' said Francke

Take a seat. I have been thinking over this case of ours and I want to have a heart to heart talk with you. Honestly and though I have only suspicion to go on, I am not satisfied with this business. I have said to myself, May not M. Werner have built up all this affair? I tell you, quite honestly, I have only suspicion to go on, and I am sure you will not be offended if I detail the case according to possibility.

Not in the least monsieur.

Well, we suppose M. Werner goes to M. Goldsak and obtains a celadon vase on approbation and takes it away. Days pass, and M. Goldsak naturally, writes for the vase or payment. M. Werner goes to Goldsak and denies ever having obtained the vase. Declares that either he must be suffering from brain disease or must have a double. He goes to Dr. Petit in great distress, then he comes to me. Strange story. I tabulate it. Some time later, M. Werner going to a café gets drunk, creates a scene. Two nights later he goes to the café again and is naturally refused a table. He can prove that he dined at home on the first night in question, so he has a clear case against the manager. I am not wearying you.

No, monsieur, go on.'

He has now definitely proved to me the existence of a double. Also, that he is a man of a high nature, as he refuses to mulct the unfortunate manager in costs. Well he is on firm ground now for the grand coup. There is always in the office safe a large quantity of diamonds, yet he waits till the board is increased by the arrival of a parcel from Amsterdam. Then one evening having left the office he returns, the concierge, of course, does not oppose him, he goes upstairs, robs the safe, and takes the diamonds away. Yet he can prove that he was at home at the time of the robbery, so the thing must have been done by the double, this *alter ego* in the flesh. Is that not so?'

'But monsieur' cried Werner, laughing, you are only saying what is obvious to anyone. If I had been as clever and wicked as you suggest, I might have attempted all this, but would have failed to prove myself what I am, innocent. Facts are greater than fancies, monsieur.

Quite so. You proved an alibi, but what did that proof rest on? The word of your valet German. Suppose he had been your accomplice?'

'Of course, monsieur,' said Werner, that would have been possible, although I never thought of it till now—but really, really, you might go on supposing all sorts of things with this case, there is no logic in this, just suspicion. It seems strange that you should adopt a process of reasoning that I can only describe as the reasoning of a woman.

Wait, wait, wait,' said Francke. Suppose M. Werner were to say to himself, I must get rid of this accomplice, he is a trouble to me? He must die.

Werner started in his chair.

"But this is horrible,' cried he. 'Poor German died yesterday. What trap is this you are preparing, what will you suggest next——? Ah. I see, you heard of his death, and you said to yourself here is another cause for suspicion—

Francke raised his hand.

Yes, he said, "you are exactly right. I heard of his death just now, and that is why I sent for you. I know nothing, but I am ordering a post-mortem, and should poison be found in his body, why, then M. Werner.

'Yes—well, what then? Oh yes, I see. Should the unfortunate man have poisoned himself the old suspicion business will begin again—you will—

"No, no, no,' said Francke, taking a paper from his desk and glancing at it. "Listen to me, M. Werner, this is not suspicion, but fact. The report of my agent who has watched all your movements for the last two months.

On the twenty-first of last month, M. Adam Werner called at the shop of Leroux in the Rue Midi and bought a packet of Jumeaux's rat powder, the basis of which is arsenic." I have ordered a post-mortem to see if arsenic is present in the body. Upon the fact of the purchase, monsieur, and until the post-mortem reveals the cause of death, I now formally arrest you.

Werner, who had been sitting without movement, sprang to his feet and clapped his hand to his mouth. Bernstein seized him, but too late, the poison he had reserved for himself had been swallowed.

IT was like the stroke of a snake killing itself with its own bite.' said Francke. 'No, the diamonds were never recovered, never will be, perhaps, because he knew how to hide things, Werner.'

But tell me,' I said, what made you so certain of the man being the criminal that you put Bernstein to watch him day and night?'

Just for this reason," said Francke. When I called at the Hotel Maysonette that day, I found that M. Werner had always used the lift there. He had no horror of lifts. Yet when he went to live in his new flat, not only did he choose a building where the stairs entrance was well away from the lift, but he suddenly developed his distaste for lifts. That fact made me certain he was the criminal. Think it out

# PRESENCE OF MIND

By GEORGE CREEL

*Illustrated by* KEITH BRYANT

"NOW *do* try to be careful to-night." At the door Mrs. Maddern lifted an anxious face. "This dinner is *so* important."

Of course, Mamma." A pained protest coloured Willie Maddern's tone. "Just because I've had bad luck now and then, you——"

No bad luck about it. Just plain absent-mindedness. Your poor father was the same."

Walking up the road, Willie made no effort to minimize the importance of the evening, for on the outcome hung his selection as literary editor of *The Watch-Dog*. Mr. Hendrick, the owner, had offered him the post tentatively, and this dinner was for the purpose of having his wife pass final judgment. An old-fashioned pair, the Hendricks. Maybe, Willie speculated gloomily, they'd want a reference from his vicar.

Happily, these fears proved groundless. The host approved his guest's sound views with respect to Longfellow and Tennyson, and Mrs. Hendrick, a prim, precise little woman, mellowed appreciably on learning that Willie lived with his widowed mother.

It was, therefore, in considerable blitheness of spirit that Willie took his leave. His progress down the long corridor of the residential hotel was a series of lightsome curvets. Suddenly, however, he found himself brought to an abrupt halt.

Naturally puzzled, he looked about for the reason and discovered that his right forefinger was snugly encased in the nozzle of a fire hose that hung on the wall. And he couldn't get it out!

Beads of perspiration gathered on his forehead. A fine chance he'd have of being literary editor if the Hendricks came out in the hall and saw him. A man who went around poking his finger into fire hoses!

Gathering several lengths of the hose in his arms, Willie staggered down the hall towards the lift. Then a squeak of anguish escaped him. The hose would reach no farther, and the confounded gate was still ten feet away!

Perhaps if he lay flat on the floor, stretching out as far as possible, he might be able to kick the ironwork. The idea came just in time to save Willie's reason. Down he went. And——

"What on earth are you doing?" a voice demanded.

Looking up, the unhappy man saw a female figure standing over him.

"It's my finger," he explained, hoarsely. "I can't get it out."

"Your finger." The girl peered intently, and then shook a puzzled head. "But how did you——"

"Please don't ask me." Willie lifted imploring eyes. "*Please!* Just help me. You've simply *got* to help me."

"Sure you're not drunk?"

"On my word of honour."

"All right, then." Helping Willie collect his hose, the young woman led him through an open door a few steps down the hall and pushed forward an easy chair. "If anybody comes along"—she smiled—"they'll certainly think it a queer hour for vacuum cleaning." At which the smile

gave way to immoderate laughter only ending at sight of Willie's stricken face.

"I'm sorry," she murmured, contritely "but it is funny. Now let's see what can be done." Taking a seat on the floor she studied the situation carefully, and then fixed a firm grip on the nozzle. "Don't jerk at first. Work it round a bit. But when I say 'Go,' give it everything you've got. Now, go!"

Willie, viewing his dead finger, went limp with relief. "Thank the Lord!" he breathed fervently.

"Go and hang up that hose while I get my first-aid kit."

*The business of bandaging gave young Maddern an opportunity for observing his rescuer in detail, and what he saw moved him instantly and profoundly.*

The business of bandaging gave young Maddern an opportunity for observing his rescuer in detail, and what he saw moved him instantly and profoundly. A peach!

"There." With a final pat the girl leaned back. "Now, let's introduce ourselves." This done, however she gave her curiosity free swing. 'If the question is in order now, how did you? Or *why* did you?"

All of it seemed dim and unimportant to Willie, but he told the whole story. "I'm always doing things like that," he confessed, unhappily. 'A year ago I went to dinner with an editor who had virtually agreed to take a series of articles. We fell to talking about a certain book and neither of us could remember the author. Well, just as I pulled out the chair for his wife the name came to me and I turned to tell him.'

'And she sat down?'

"Yes. And hard, too. I just couldn't convince them I wasn't a practical joker."

'You poor dear!' There was laughter in the dark eyes, but laughter with a touch of tenderness. "It's just as well the Hendricks didn't come out into the hall. The old lady's absolutely humourless and narrow as a knife blade. Because I'm an artist and live here by myself she's sure I'm a lost soul."

"An artist?" gasped Willie. "Are you *the* Miss Haskell?"

Bless you for that flattering emphasis."

AN excited conversation established backgrounds and located mutual friends, and over a plate of sandwiches, put together by joint effort, the two progressed from art and literature to an intimate discussion of dreams and hopes and ideals.

Good lord!" Willie, glancing at his watch, loosed a bleat of dismay. "It's twelve o'clock!'

Babbling his gratitude, he opened the door and on the instant words trailed off into meaningless gurgles. There before him stood Mrs. Hendrick returning from a swift dart to the post box, and even as he goggled the surprise in her eyes gave way to horror.

'Dear Mrs. Hendrick!' Pushing him aside Miss Haskell sprang forward and grasped the hands of the other. 'How happy you and your husband have made us.'

'Us?" Mrs. Hendrick echoed the word uncertainly.

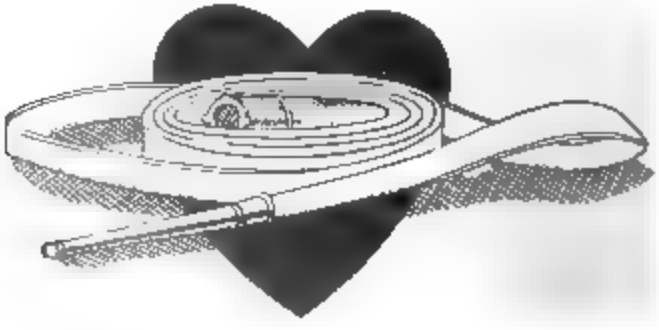
"Oh, of course you couldn't know. Willie and I are engaged. And now that he has the editorship, we—we——" the dark head ducked coyly and a gush of laughter completed the sentence.

Willie took no part in the chatter that followed and even when her door had closed behind Mrs. Hendrick he stood silent, shaking his head now and then as if to clear his mind of mists.

'Quit worrying." Miss Haskell's tone was gaily consoling. 'In a month or two you can tell them you've found out I'm not the sort of person you want for a wife."

'But I'm not worried.' For once Willie Maddern faced a crisis without gulps and confusion. "And you *are* the sort of person I want for a wife.'

Telephone me to-morrow," Miss Haskell whispered, as the lock clicked.



# AMONG THIEVES

## By W. TOWNEND

*Illustrated by LEO BATES*

THE day was warm the sea was calm, and the promenade deck was crowded with passengers, walking to and fro, chatting, laughing, gesticulating, or merely sitting supine in their deck chairs, basking in the June sun, getting acquainted with their neighbours, exchanging reminiscences in French and English of other voyages and other steamers and other lines, their accommodation and service and cooking.

On board ship, it seemed generally agreed food is as important as a high rate of knots, or comfortable state-rooms, or steadiness, or efficient officers, or safety.

Had the weather been bad however, Sturge thought, food would have been a little less important to these pampered plutocrats whose value to the world was not equal to their wealth. Being a newspaper man Sturge was no respecter of persons. He had no ideals, no delusions.

A lean, smallish, clean-shaven man wearing big tortoiseshell-rimmed glasses, sat in a chair and with a grave countenance surveyed the other passengers, men, women and children, as though estimating either their moral characters or their personal possessions or their nationalities.

Sturge approached and said —

'Mr Temperley!"

The man with the tortoiseshell-rimmed glasses looked up.

"I don't believe——" he said. His forehead wrinkled.

Sturge smiled and gave his name.

"I've been touring the United States for the London *Daily Messenger*. I met you a couple of months ago in Boston, Mr Temperley, when you had that exhibition of your paintings."

"Why of course," said Temperley. He made as though to rise from his chair, but Sturge stopped him.

"Don't get up, please," he said and dropped into the empty chair by his side. "Paris?"

"Sure, and Florence, then maybe Dresden."

"And not London? Mr Temperley you ought to see London before you return home."

"Are you going to London, Mr Sturge?"

"I am."

"Why the French liner then, and a steamer that isn't going to England?"

"I'm on a story. Paris first, then London."

"You'll be glad to be back in London?"

"I shall," Sturge said. "New York's all right, Chicago's all right, Paris is all right, but London can give you what no other city on earth can or does."

"Romance," said Temperley, "adventure, fame. Yes that's London. If you make good in London, the world's yours." Turning in his chair he looked with twinkling eyes at Sturge. "What made you imagine I'd never been in London though?"

"Why," said Sturge, "I hardly know. You never said." He laughed. "So you know London Mr Temperley?"

"I know London as well as you do perhaps. I know the London of the side streets off the Edgware Road, the fried fish shops, the pawnshops, the night coffee-stalls. I know Soho and the coffee bars of Greek Street. I know what it is to be without a penny in the world in London."

"So you're not one of the heaven-born who've never known poverty, then!" said Sturge.

Me no,' said Temperley 'Mrs Temperley and I could tell you stories of our early days in London that would surprise you.' He flicked the ash off his cigar and smiled to himself Some of these millionaires you see some of these magnates of the film or oil or cotton or steel, and their women would be amused, or astonished, if they knew the agonies we suffered while the fear of starvation was on us

Sturge grinned He said —

'You don't imagine that these people have been rich and respectable all their lives, I hope

Perhaps not, said Temperley Some, yes

A YOUNG woman, wearing a grey suit with a pink silk scarf about her neck a small pink beret, grey silk stockings and grey high heeled pumps, passed where the two men sat With her was a small, stout man, with dark, bright eyes and a small black moustache The woman, who might have been thirty, was slender and very beautiful, if discontented. She had dark curly hair dark blue eyes, delicate features, and the artificial pink of her lips contrasted oddly with the faint sunburn of her cheeks. She had an air of regarding herself as superior to all the other people on board ship, of possessing wealth and power and birth, of knowing that whatever she desired she could have

That girl in grey now, Temperley said what does she know of real life? She's rich she's still young, she's beautiful No woman who hadn't been born to wealth could carry herself as she does. In her you behold all France, Mr Sturge'

Be prepared for a shock, Sturge said " That young woman is no more France than you are She's English, to begin with True she's French by nationality, because her husband's French She's rich yes, but I have reason to believe that before she married she was in the chorus.

Where on earth did you learn that?' Temperley said

One learns a good deal on a newspaper

She's clever, anyway

For an Englishwoman, yes

You speak as though Englishwomen were fools. The cleverest woman I ever met was English She was employed in a tobacconist's in the Tottenham Court Road I knew her well

" Tell me' Sturge said

" There's nothing to tell

In the Tottenham Court Road, you say?"

"On the left hand side, going north I used to go in there on my way home to buy cigarettes. She was a nice girl, quite young, eighteen or so, with golden hair and a husky voice. She used to talk to me about New York She was tired of London

'On your way home? If it isn't a rude question —

Not at all. Mrs. Temperley and I were living in rooms the other side of the Euston Road one room—and we had no money

None

None And no credit We were just about desperate when an old Scotsman who made a fortune in the old days in California gave me a commission to paint his wife's portrait It wasn't the kind of thing I crave to do, but I couldn't afford to throw away the chance to earn fifty pounds."

Another rude question,' said Sturge " Why wasn't it the kind of thing you wanted to do?"

His wife had been dead a quarter of a century and I had to paint her picture from a photograph taken in San Francisco in eighteen eighty and faded He said she was a lovely woman, but she wasn't that in the photograph, so you can see I hadn't an easy job At the same he was delighted with the portrait, and when it was finished he asked me to dine with him, and when it was time to say good-night paid me exactly twice what he'd promised a hundred pounds instead of fifty Possibly you can imagine my feelings

If I try hard,' said Sturge, ' yes."

I walked on air " Temperley said. I was intoxicated Not with the wine we'd had at dinner, but with the thought of the two fifty-pound Bank of England notes I had in my wallet and the realization that there was nothing now to keep Mrs Temperley and myself in England To morrow I thought, I'd book our passages to New York

I turned into a quiet street between dark and shuttered shops, singing because I was happy, and I saw standing under a lamp a group of three people One was a policeman one was a thick-set, heavy man with a criminal and disgusting face one was a girl in a dark coat I'd have passed without a second thought if the girl hadn't called me by name

Mr Temperley, she said, do stop Please

I stopped at once and recognized the girl from the tobacconist's

Mr Temperley,' she said, ' tell them who I am.'

You're Miss Beaufort, I said. Netty Beaufort

There, said the girl ' what did I say?

It's a lie, said the man with the debauched and dissolute face a more

*"I recognised her as the girl from the tobacconist's as she cried: 'Mr. Temperley, do stop, please!'"*

dishonest face I never saw It's a lie he said, a deliberate and consummate lie

"I didn't argue. I said Say that again and I'll give you a smack on the nose

That cowed the man no doubt He temporized He said in a high and lofty way If she told you her name was Beaufort, why did she tell me it was Warner?

But I didn't, the girl said. I didn't

That ought to have put a stop to his lies, but it did nothing of the kind He said You'll say next you never stole my money from me

But I didn't, the girl said. How could I steal your money when I've never seen you before? I want to go home

And you shall I said. 'You shall

But the policeman objected He said he was afraid she couldn't go home, not yet at least The girl said

He came up to me in the street Mr Temperley and took hold of my arm and accused me of stealing some money of his I've never seen him before in my life

'By now there must have been fifteen or twenty people listening, loafers most of them of a not very reputable appearance and, in a way, because of the hundred pounds I had on me I was glad the policeman was with us

Officer I said, I've known this young lady for the past nine months. I've seen her nearly every day It seems to me,' I said a case of mistaken identity

Maybe it is, said the policeman. All the same she'll have to come to the station

Mr Temperley said the girl. I helped you once, didn't I? You'll help me now won't you?

Nothing would give me greater pleasure, I said One good turn deserved another

Sturge, who had been listening intently said —

She'd helped you, Mr Temperley? How?'

One evening soon after Mrs. Temperley and I first came to London, a man tried to pick my pocket at a tube station in a crowd The girl, Netty Beaufort, spotted what he was up to and tried to grab hold of him and stop him, but he was too quick and too strong for her He broke away from her and bolted. And was I grateful? I'll say I was The fifty pounds in my wallet was all the money I had, and I didn't know what I'd have done if he'd got away with it

And now I had a hundred pounds, and I felt that the sooner Mrs. Temperley and I paid what we owed and got back to New York the better I was still wondering how soon we could leave London when we reached the Inspector's office in the police station and the man whose face I didn't like and whose name was Morse began his story which needless to say, I didn't believe a word of."

And the story?' Sturge said.

The story' said Temperley Morse's story, you mean Mr Sturge, you never heard a more absurd attempt at a story in your life. He said he had met Miss Warren in a railway train—he called her Warren—and she had dropped her parasol and he had picked it up for her That, he said, was how they entered into conversation She had asked him if he knew the way to some street or other and he had said he was going that way himself and would be pleased to accompany her When he said good-night he asked if he might call, and she said why not?

When he got as far as that the girl said there wasn't a word of truth in anything he'd said The Inspector, who was a nice, fatherly man, asked her to wait and not interrupt Morse went on with his lies.

He told us he'd called to see Miss Warren, who lived with a sick mother in rooms over a baker's shop in Colston Street He'd called on her a lot. He'd taken her to theatres and dances and restaurants. After he'd known her two or three weeks he asked her to be his wife

That made the girl mad She said You'll say next I said I would Morse said You certainly did! and the girl said You despicable liar!

The fatherly Inspector told her to hush. Morse went on with his story He said he'd met her mother, her uncle, her cousin James and lots of her friends. He said her uncle had told him her father had died owing money, and her mother had crippled herself trying to pay off his debts, and the family thought if he married Miss Warren he ought to do something to help. Morse said he'd be tickled to death and gave her a hundred pounds, a handsome present, undoubtedly'

TEMPERLEY tilted his head on one side and looked gravely at Sturge He said:

You're beginning to see the enormity of the thing now, aren't you? Morse was a crook and a liar Netty said she wasn't going to listen to another word but the Inspector—I said what a fatherly-looking man he was, didn't I? the Inspector told her she must be patient and let him deal with the case properly He asked Morse, then what charge could there be against the girl if he'd given her the money? And then Morse—listen to this, Mr Sturge, it's comic—Morse pretended he hadn't given her the

money at all. He'd showed her the hundred pounds outside the house where she was living. Netty took the notes and told him she was going to show them to her mother. Would he wait? He did wait. He waited half an hour. When he knocked at the door and asked how much longer Miss Warren—she was Miss Warren to him, of course—was going to keep him waiting, the landlady told him she hadn't been living there for weeks. She'd walked into the house by one door and out by another. That was the story, at least.

"Netty denied everything he said. Her mother had been dead seven years. She'd never lived anywhere near Coliston Street. She shared a room in Haverford Terrace with a girl friend who was sick and expecting her back with some medicine. She had the bottle of medicine with her. She worked, she said, in a tobacconist's in the Tottenham Court Road. She said: 'You're not going to detain me, surely. I've never seen this man in my life.' I thought she was going to cry. 'What proof is there,' she said, 'that he isn't making everything up, which, of course, he is?'

"The Inspector, I could see, agreed with her, but he had his duty, however painful. He said:

'I'll accept the charge. But,' he said, 'I'll grant bail. When the charge sheet is signed, Miss Beaufort, I'll be willing to accept a surety.' Morse objected, and he said: 'Mr. Morse, this young woman has been taken into custody without a warrant for an alleged offence which she may or may not have committed. I'm going to grant bail. Having settled Morse,' he turned to Netty. 'Miss Beaufort,' he said, 'unless satisfactory bail can be found you'll be detained here till you go before the magistrate in the morning. You understand, don't you?'

'Mr. Temperley will go bail for me,' she said.

'I said: "Of course!" The Inspector asked me my name and looked at my papers of identification, my passport and my wife's and some personal letters from the United States, and was satisfied I was what I said I was. The photograph on the passport tallied, at least. That wasn't the end of it, however. I wasn't a resident in London. I was only a visitor. The amount of bail had to be regulated by the value of the alleged theft. In this case, a hundred pounds! A large sum. He was sorry, but he would have to have a better surety than myself.

'I knew what I was in for. Netty had helped me. I must help her. Unless I could get her back to her sick friend I'd never be able to hold my head up again. I said:

'What's the matter with my planking down a hundred pounds in cash?'

"The Inspector was surprised. He said it was hardly likely I'd have so large a sum on me. I took my wallet out of my pocket and showed him the two fifty-pound Bank of England notes. Would he accept them as Miss Beaufort's bail? He would. He said he'd get me to sign the bail book and he'd give me a bail form directing me where to appear next day. Morse made some remarks about a fool and his money. I told him I prided myself on being a judge of character. I knew that Netty was as honest a girl as there was in all London. I turned my back on him and listened to the particulars being entered on the charge sheet.

'I wasn't happy. Mr. Sturge, naturally. I'd handed my hundred pounds over to the police. Suppose, I thought, something happened to Netty! Suppose Mrs. Temperley should get to hear what I'd done? The trouble was I'd never told her how Netty had saved me from losing my fifty pounds. I'd never told her about Netty at all. Wouldn't Mrs. Temperley say I'd no business to risk our money on strangers? She would, if I told her, of course.

NETTY was taken to the matron's room to be searched. When she came back the Inspector told her where she must attend next day, and then he said: 'Miss Beaufort, will you let us take your finger prints?'

My sympathies were with the girl. She looked horrified. 'You mean to tell me,' she said, 'you're going to treat me like a criminal?'

'I'm bound to say, Miss Beaufort,' said the Inspector, 'you've a right to object.'

'Then I do object,' she said. 'I think it's an insult for any respectable girl to be asked that.'

'And then the Inspector said there was no reason why we should wait. We were free to go. In the street Netty said: "I wonder if I really am like the girl who took that man's money?" I said: "I wonder if there's a girl at all?" She hadn't looked at it from that angle, she said. Perhaps this Morse man was worse than she'd thought. She asked me how I happened to have so much money on me, knowing I was more or less broke. I told her about the picture. She said I'd never lose by it. Her bus came along, and she got on board and waved her hand to me, and I walked home.'

For a while Temperley sat, smiling to himself and gazing out across the rail at the blue sea and sky. Sturge said, presently:

'You lost your money, of course.'

'Wait till you hear what happened,' said Temperley. "I went home. Mrs

was to get the money next day. I said I'd book our passages back home to New York. I said the luck had turned. We'd never look back. Nevertheless, Mr Sturge, I had a foreboding that I'd lost my money. Something would keep Netty away from the police-court and her bail would be forfeited.

"I should like to say, Mr Sturge, that's what happened exactly."

"So you did lose your money?" Sturge said.

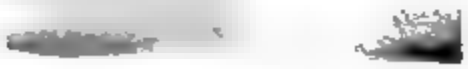
"I lost my money."

"I knew she wouldn't surrender to her bail, Mr Temperley. If you don't mind my saying so, you were simple."

"I was, Mr Sturge. I was. Netty's case didn't come on when I reached the court. And I sat and listened to the other cases and looked about me and tried to see her. I didn't see Netty, but I saw Morse and Ikard. The look of arm less now than I had even the night before, and I thought what a liar he was and how impossible it could be that a girl like Netty Beaumont could have promised to be the wife of such a scoundrel.

*"Unless satisfactory bail can be found, Miss Beaufort,' said the Inspector, 'you will be detained here till you go before the magistrate in the morning.'"*

Temperley was hardly himself with worry. She'd thought I would relieve or something reassured her. I'd stayed late after dinner talking to Sir Reginald Scrymgeour. And we'd got on to the subject. Had he brought it up? she said. He'd not only brought it, I told her, he was paying us not fifty pounds but a hundred, twice as much as he'd promised. Mrs. Temperley was overjoyed. And the money? Ah, there I confess I temporized. In fact, not to put too fine a point upon it, I lied. I said I



there was misery stamped all over his countenance.

The case was on. We waited for Netty to come into court. We waited for something

to happen. The magistrate leaned over his desk and spoke to the clerk. Morse and his lawyer talked to one of the officials of the court. Someone called her name. Miss Beaufort. She never came. She forfeited

When I got outside the court I felt terrible. My legs were weak under me. I could hardly stand. Natty Beaumont who I'd trusted had let me down. I wondered how I was going to tell Mrs. Temperley. Why, I wondered, hadn't the girl been straight with me. Didn't she understand I'd lose my hundred pounds if she didn't appear in court?

Morse came up to me and said: 'Well, you've lost your hundred pounds. So did I. Some day you'll learn sense, won't you? That girl swindled me out of a hundred pounds the same as she did you. I believed in her and you believed in her.'

She wasn't swindling you,' I said.

She pretended she'd fallen in love with me,' he said.

Don't be a fool,' I said. 'What girl would fall in love with you?'

'I was so angry I could have killed him. I'd a good mind to hit him. He said: 'What do you mean by that?' He lifted his cane. I said: 'Get back or I'll lay you out.'

That girl,' he said, 'is as bad as they make 'em, but she's pretty. So you believe in her. You're soft.'

I saw, as they say, red. I was going to hit him, I'd chosen the place. The tip of his nose. I drew back my fist and someone caught hold of my wrist and said —

"'That'll do, Mr. Temperley.'

"I turned and saw a dark, middle-aged broad man in a dark blue overcoat and soft hat. I told him to let go my wrist. He wouldn't. He said to Morse: 'You clear out of this, sharp, or you'll be back in that police-court sooner than you like.'

MORSE made off. The broad, dark man said: 'Mr. Temperley, don't you be a dam' fool.'

'Are you a plain-clothes man?' I said.

'That's what Morse thought,' he said. 'No. I'm not.'

I turned and walked away, but the dark man walked with me. 'Don't be a fool, Mr. Temperley,' he said. 'You went bail for Miss Beaufort last night, didn't you?' I said: 'Yes. I did, and she let me down. She didn't appear in court.'

'But she would have, if she'd been able, he said.

"'She's not sick, is she?' I said, and I'm speaking the truth, Mr. Sturge, when I say my heart bounded in sudden hope, hope that my faith in human nature had not, after all, been destroyed.

"'She's not sick,' said the dark man. 'She's never been better in her life. She's on her way to Paris.'

I knew then that that scoundrel Morse was right. I said: 'She broke her word. She isn't straight.'

"'She is,' said the man. 'Netty's the straightest girl in the world. But you got to make allowances. Things weren't quite what they seemed.'

"'What do you mean?' I said.

It was only luck, the dark man said, 'that there wasn't anyone in the police station last night that knew her. If she'd spent the night in the cells they'd have had her in the morning. They've got her finger-prints at the Yard, her photograph, her record. I take it,' he said, 'seeing you went bail for her, you'll keep what I'm telling you under your hat.'

I was too far gone to speak. I just nodded my head.

"'Well,' said the man, 'that job of hers at the tobacconist's was a kind of alibi. Proof of respectability, that's all. Beaufort isn't her name, no more is Warren. She's a good kid and don't you forget it. She was dark and plump when the police put her away two years ago, now she's fair and skinny, but the finger-prints would have queered the pitch. If she'd been pinched, the whole lot of us would have been pinched, too. See? You saved us by going bail. You don't remember me,' he said, 'do you?'

"I didn't and said so. I'd never seen him before in my life. I never wanted to see him again any more than I wanted to see that sour-faced hypocrite, Morse.

"'You don't remember me,' he said, 'because I've had my hair cut and shaved my moustache. Foreign musician I was when you last seen me. Don't you remember me trying to pick your pocket last winter in the tube?'

'Was that you?' I said. 'But it was Miss Beaufort who saw you and tried to stop you.'

The dark man shut one eye and grinned and tapped the side of his nose with his finger.

"'No,' he said. 'She twigged I'd been spotted, not by you, but by an old lady on the platform, and the only thing to do was to pretend to catch hold of me so as to keep you or anyone else from grabbing me, and give me a chance to escape. Why,' he said, 'before you could get within twenty feet of me I was off down a stairway and into a train on another platform. Trust Netty. Well, Mr. Temperley,' he said, 'I've got to be going. I said Netty was straight. She is. She never forgets a pal. She told us all about you last night. She said you was over here because you'd got into trouble in Chicago with the police. She said we got to do all we could for you. And so, it's the least we can do. See?'

'And then, before I knew what he meant, before I could explain, he was under a misapprehension and that I'd only been in Chicago once in my life, passing through, he had put a package into my hand and was hurrying away. When I opened the package I found fifteen ten-pound Bank of England notes, one hundred and fifty pounds.' Again Temperley looked at Sturge with his head on one side and his eyes twinkling behind his spectacles. "Queer story, isn't it? And true, every word. But I can assure you, Mr. Sturge, that the part about my having been in trouble with the police in Chicago worried me. For a long time I couldn't understand why the girl should have told her associates such an untruth, and then it dawned on me that possibly, knowing them, she felt there was more hope of my getting my money back if she said I had a criminal record, so to speak, and was even a potential gunman. Whether it was her idea, though, or not that I should be rewarded with an extra fifty pounds over and above the bail money, I can't say."

Sturge said:

"She'll never be able to set foot in England again, of course. You know that, Mr. Temperley, don't you?"

'I don t suppose that will worry Netty' Temperley said 'I used to think it would but it won t, I m sure."

Sturge considered

Ever tell anyone before ?' he said

Mrs. Temperley " Temperley grinned " I had to I was so ashamed'

The young woman in the grey suit with the pink scarf and the pink beret who had been walking up and down with the stout Frenchman approached by herself. She looked at Temperley with a curious intentness Temperley rose to his feet

Are you Meester Temperley ? she said, speaking with a quaint little accent.

I am, Temperley said

'You ave forgot me, of course I ought to ave recognize you but I did not—not till I 'ear your name. I meet you in London a long time ago." She laughed " You know don t you ?" she said Her accent was no longer foreign.

Then it s you, after all, ' said Temperley

I never zank you " said the young woman, once more a foreigner I 'ad no chance. I ad to go to Paris on ver important business to see ze sista re of an ol' frien who was ver ill Again she laughed I do it well don t I ? How are you Mr Temperley '

A few minutes later Temperley came back to where Sturge still sat smoking

I take it," Sturge said between ourselves that the young woman in grey is an old friend of yours ?

She is, said Temperley gravely " She's a Mme Cadoret the wife of a well-known silk manufacturer and a partner in her husband s large and growing business. She s returning to Paris she tells me, after a visit to New York And she is not I gather contemplating a visit to England, a country which does not, she said, attract her in the slightest


# *"The Strand Magazine" for July*

*will contain*

*a brilliant complete story entitled "THE MAGNET"*

*by*

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*(the famous author of "The House Under the Water," "Portrait of Clare," etc.)*

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GILBERT FRANKAU ROLAND PERTWEE

SIR JOHN FOSTER FRASER

F. TENNYSON JESSE W. B. MAXWELL

*and others*

# PERPLEXITIES

### 1,151.—A SHOE PROBLEM.

A CERTAIN shoe-making firm, which supplies shoes in three qualities only—"De Luxe" at 30s., "Reliable" at 23s., and "Popular" at 11s. a pair—finds that book-keeping is simplified by the following regulation:—

"The stock of each Branch Establishment must contain, at the beginning of the week, exactly one hundred pairs of shoes, not fewer than twenty of each quality, of a total selling value of one hundred pounds, replenishments of stock being supplied from Head-quarters as required."

How many pairs must there be of each kind?

### 1,152.—AN EASY CALCULATION.

IN the following multiplication the digits 0 to 9 in order are represented by the letters of an appropriate phrase. What is it?

```
    SIX
    SIX
  -----
   MEGU
  MMGOE
 GEXNRA
-------
GAMMENTL
```

This might be rather hard to discover, but the information that S stands for seven ("Obvious, my dear Watson!") makes the decoding a comparatively simple matter.

```
    EMTNS
      AGE
  -------
     MEGU
    MMGOE
   GEXNRA
  -------
   GAMMENTL
```

### 1,153.—INTELLIGENT BOLONIANS.

THE franchise in Bolonia is restricted to adults, of either sex, who have obtained what is known as an Intelligence Certificate, for which an annual examination is held. In the city of Vlajio, one of the most cultured centres, five per cent. of the population are entitled to vote. At a recent election in that city 7,664 males and 2,632 females voted—in all, three per cent. of the population. What is the maximum number of "intelligent" females that there can possibly be in Vlajio?

### 1,154.—ONE FINE DAY.

MR. SMALLWAYS has a school consisting of seven boys. Each receives a weekly sum as pocket-money, the amounts fixed by the respective parents, being all different. If a boy gets three "bad marks" in any one week, his allowance for the ensuing week is stopped.

During the first seven weeks of the term, all seven boys incurred this penalty, once each and only once per week, as a result Mr. Smallways gave out the following amounts of pocket-money on the seven successive pay-days:

4s. 2d., 5s. 1d., 3s. 11d., 4s. 3d., 4s. 10d., 4s. 7d., 4s. 8d.

What were the individual allowances of the boys?

### 1,155.—THE LAMPLIGHTER'S PROGRESS.

A KIDDERMINSTER reader suggests this problem.

In a street running East and West the lamps are "staggered," so that the distance from any one lamp to its neighbour on the same side is the same as the distance from one to its neighbour on the opposite side. There is a lamp at each South corner.

The lamplighter enters the street by a South corner, lights up all the lamps on the South side first, the North lamps afterwards, and leaves by the same South corner. If he crossed backwards and forwards, lighting South and North lamps alternately and then returned to the point where he entered the street, he would walk sixty yards further.

If the lamps are twelve yards apart, how many are there altogether, and how long is the street?

## Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles

### 1,146.—VISIBILITY POOR.

A was travelling 300 yards in 25 seconds,
i.e., 12 yards per second.
was overtaking at the rate of 300 yards in 135 seconds,
i.e., $\frac{20}{9}$ yards per second.
Therefore the other car was going $12 - \frac{20}{9}$ yards per second
$= \frac{88}{9}$ yards per second
$= 20$ m.p.h.

### 1,147.—WORD SQUARE.

```
S K A C E S
R E S O R T
A S T H M A
C O H E I R
E R M I N E
S T A R E S
```

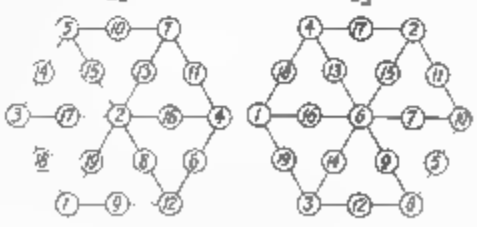
### 1,148.—LOCATE LOWER LANGLEY.

CALLING the distances from Slacton to Lower Langley, and from Hinkbury to Lower Langley, $x$ and $y$ miles respectively,

then $x = 2y$
Also $2x = y + 7\frac{1}{2}$
i.e. $x + y = 7\frac{1}{2}$

So that the sum of the distance between Slacton to Lower Langley and from Hinkbury to Lower Langley is the same as the whole distance from Slacton to Hinkbury. That is to say, Lower Langley can only be situated on the direct route from Slacton to Hinkbury, and is five miles from the former and two-and-a-half from the latter.

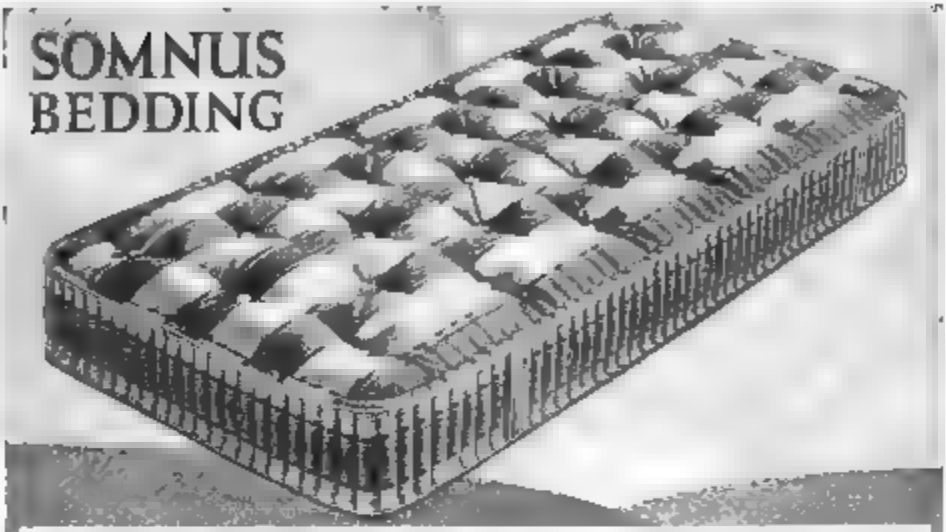
### 1,149.—CAN YOU FIGURE THIS OUT?




### 1,150.—ODD AND EVEN.

79, 5, 1 84, 1

# SOMNUS BEDDING



After all, it's the kind of bed you sleep on that determines the kind of sleep you get.

*Ask your Furnisher or write us for booklets. The Bedding House of Rhodes, Carlton Cross Mills, Leeds or Lotus Street, Nottingham*

London Showrooms: 70, Lawrence Lane, Cheapside, E.C.

# Who recommends it?

**2½D**

**Says the Hiker — *I do, it cuts mileage in two...***

# ...I recommend Cadburys

**BOURNVILLE FRUIT & NUT**

CADBURY'S
Cadbury's Sweet Nut Milk
Cadbury's Milk Fruit & Nut
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Cadbury's Milk
Bournville with Roasted Almonds

*Inquiries should be addressed to "MILADY," c/o THE STRAND MAGAZINE, 8-11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed for reply.*

**A British-Made Fountain Pen.**

The woman who has to do a lot of writing should treat herself to a new British fountain-pen which is vastly superior to the ordinary run. It holds three or four times as much ink as pens of similar size and this ink is contained *not* in a perishable rubber sac, but in a *transparent*, indestructible holder that shows you at a glance just how the supply stands. You fill it in an instant by means of a pump, it can't overflow, and you don't soil your fingers. The pen cannot possibly leak, yet it writes the instant it touches the paper, and there is a wide range of nibs to suit exactly every hand. The standard model costs 30s., and there is a special ladies' model with neat gold lines, at 35s.—a very dainty but serviceable article. This splendid pen is guaranteed for ten years, but with ordinary care should last a lifetime. It would make an ideal present.

**Seasonable Renovations.**

Lengthening days and strengthening sunshine are now revealing the shabbiness of old curtains and hangings. If you are thinking about getting something new this year I should like you to see the catalogue issued by a well-known firm of specialists. They provide *everything* for window decoration, from curtains to pelmets, sun-nets, casement cloths, muslins, and cretonnes, and their big illustrated list contains particulars of some very interesting new fabrics, at all sorts of prices. The values offered are remarkable, you should certainly study this catalogue before making your purchases.

**The Care of Silver.**

A Midland reader who rejoices in the possession of a nice collection of silver asks for my advice in connexion with suitable polishes, some of those she has used, she says, have not been satisfactory, and she suspects that they have a deleterious effect on the metal. The preparation I recommend, H. C. A., has been on the market for many years, and is guaranteed to be absolutely non-injurious to silver and plate. It is in powder form, and very economical; but its greatest virtues, to my mind, are its brilliance and cleanliness. It gives a perfect polish without the slightest trace of smears. After a few applications you will find your silver looking ever so much better. The preparation is sold in four sizes, at 6d., 1s., 2s., and 4s.

(*Continued on page* 32.)

# BUY YOUR HOUSE
THROUGH
# THE PRUDENTIAL

Under the Prudential Assurance Company's House Purchase Scheme, combined with endowment assurance, a Loan can be arranged to help you to buy your house

## AND DISPENSE WITH RENT

Advances of about 80% of the value are made at the low rate of interest of 5% per annum and can be allowed to run until maturity of the endowment assurance, or repaid at any time in full or by instalments

Should the borrower die before the maturity of the assurance, the Loan will be automatically repaid out of the sum payable under the assurance, thus leaving the dependants with a house free of mortgage. Loans on houses of a less value than about £600 are not ordinarily entertained

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Please send me full particulars of your House Purchase Scheme, combined with Life Assurance.
Age next birthday
Purchase Price of House £

Name
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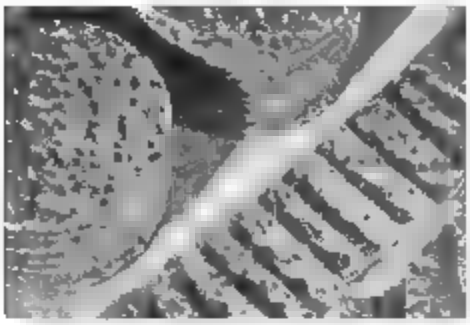
## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*Continued*



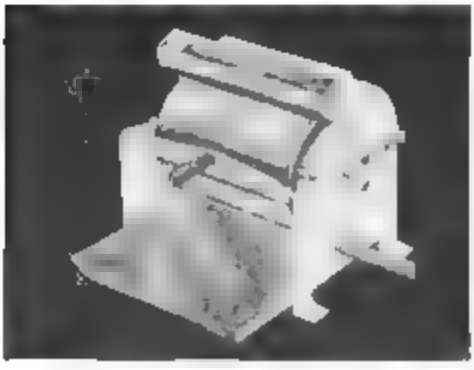
*A new wheaten biscuit of delightful flavour.*

### Delightful Biscuits.

It is nice, when entertaining, to be able to offer one's guests little dainties that they have not come across before. If you would like to know of some novelties of this kind in the way of biscuits, let me introduce you to the products of an enterprising firm which has placed some most delightful specialities on the market. They have, for instance, a delicious chocolate-coated biscuit, a ginger shortcake of very delicate flavour, a honey bake, and a savoury "cheese biscuit that goes down splendidly with a cocktail. Another line, a water biscuit, has achieved much more than local fame; there is also a wheaten square that I am sure you would like. All these biscuits are of the highest possible quality, and are sold in handy tins at prices ranging from 1s. 9d. to 2s. 6d. A generous sample tin costs 6d. post free.

### Ice-Cream in Ten Seconds!

Here's something that should be a boon indeed to the housewife during the summer months—a "lightning" ice-cream freezer that requires no chemicals or power! You simply pour in the mixture, turn the handle a few times, and in *ten seconds* you have perfect ice-cream. A gallon costs only 2d. for ice. I can foresee a rush on this clever little machine directly it becomes known. It costs only 47s. 6d. complete.



*This little machine makes perfect ice-cream in ten seconds without chemicals or power.*

### A Dainty Sports Garment.

I am illustrating here a charming sports blouse made by a firm whose cellular fabrics for outer and under-wear are world-famous. It is ideal for leisure or games, very smart and yet comfortable, and is available in a wide range of charming colours, all guaranteed to wash excellently. This

*A charming new sports blouse.*

most becoming little garment costs only 6s. 11d. The same house also makes topping sports shirts for ladies, in various patterns, with button or "zipp" fastenings.

### An Easy Road To Health.

I am not a doctor, of course, but judging by the experience of many of my friends I feel that I am quite safe in recommending you to a tonic that can hardly fail to do you a world of good. This is a preparation of pure ale yeast in *granular* form—not tablets—which makes it particularly easy

(*Continued on page 34.*)

## "A SMALL DOSE QUICKLY SOOTHES"

"and the children love it." So writes a mother—one of the many thousands who have found that the finest remedy for all children's stomach troubles—indigestion, acidity, wind, etc., is

## DINNEFORD'S PURE FLUID MAGNESIA

the safe and *natural* antacid and laxative which has been the friend of the mother and the nurse for over a century. Try Dinneford's to-day—give 1 or 2 teaspoonfuls before each feed or add that quantity to each bottle.

1/3 & 2/6 per bottle.

BRITISH MADE. BRITISH OWNED.

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Uniform support obtained throughout.

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AN IDEAL TRUSS FOR THE TROPICS.

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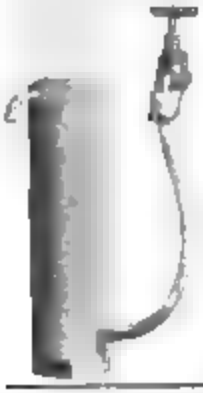

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### THE "TETTORO" WATER SOFTENER

**66/-**

Choice of 5 Colours: Blue, Green, Cream, Onyxblack or Rose

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## WHY REMAIN GREY?

Should you be troubled with white grey, greying, faded, or otherwise discoloured hair, you should write to-day to the Facktative Co. (Suite 81), 66, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1, for a free copy of their Boudoir Booklet describing how to cure grey or faded hair without the use of dyes or stains.

Free yourself from **HEADACHES**

## GENASPRIN

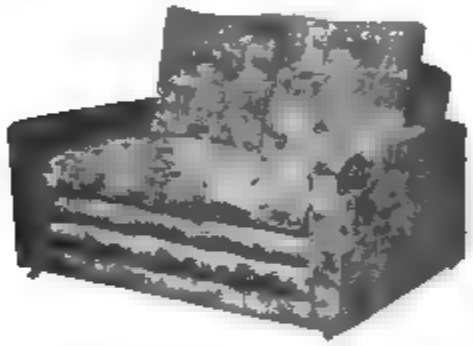
—take

THE *SAFE* BRAND OF ASPIRIN

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued*

to take with one's meals, you merely have to sprinkle it over your food. This yeast tones-up the digestive system in a most remarkable way, it also enriches the blood and thereby re-vitalizes jaded nerves. Friends who have tried it report very gratifying improvement in health, and as a neat little bottle containing fifteen days' supply costs 1s. 3d., the treatment costs only a penny a day! I should like to stress the point that this yeast preparation is perfectly harmless, containing no drugs whatever, but sufferers from digestive troubles will find it most efficacious, while its beneficial effect on the nerves is very marked. This may be just the tonic to meet your own case, and I strongly advise a trial.



*This handsome settee is very moderately priced.*

### Settees for Comfort.

No lounge or living-room is ready complete without a comfortable settee; the trouble is that worth-while settees are usually pretty expensive. Here is a picture of a thoroughly well-built article at a moderate price, luxuriously sprung and upholstered, and made to "take down" into sections for easy cleaning and loose-covering. A settee of this kind is a splendid investment, adding enormously to the appearance of your home. Prices are according to length, from ten guineas for the 4ft. 4in. size, to £13 10s. for the 5ft. 4in. A wide choice of coverings is available for your selection.

### Beautiful Scots Underwear.

Browsing, as is often my wont, through the fascinating catalogues issued by a famous Scots underwear firm, I note how splendidly they are keeping abreast of the modern demand for light-weight garments. Wool, as everyone knows, is unique in its qualities, but some folk, with memories of the things they wore in childhood, think of woollen underwear as thick, bulky, and more utilitarian than beautiful. That idea, however, is completely out of date; this firm's products are as dainty as the most finicky could demand, yet the superlative qualities of pure new wool are retained unimpaired. Fine, flexible, and light, it nevertheless looks and feels like silk, with a natural sheen of its own, and washes most beautifully. Prices are remarkably moderate, and you should certainly see this firm's underwear, knitted sports garments and bathing suits.

### Cleaning Panama Hats.

Panama hats that have become slightly soiled can be restored to their original freshness by a good rub-over with stale bread, using a new piece directly the original one begins to get discoloured. When you have finished, go over the whole hat with a rough towel, and you will be surprised to note the improvement.

### Shoe-Stains on Stockings.

A Cheltenham reader complains that she is always getting her nice silk stockings smeared with polish, black or brown, which not only spoils their whole appearance while in wear but takes a lot of getting out in the wash. She wants to know what the remedy is. If you could be certain of never rubbing your shoes against your stockings, P. L., and never resting one foot upon the other when sitting down, you might be able to avoid this trouble. The best cure I know of is prevention – by using a *white* cream which does not stain. The cream I have in mind I shall be glad to give you; its name is splendid for [illegible] polished leathers. It [illegible] into the [illegible], nourishing the [illegible] keeping [illegible] quite [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

*(Continued on page 36.)*

# The amazing Vital Energy of Phillips Live Yeast

**A NATURAL REMEDY**
**A LIFE GIVING TONIC**

**PHILLIPS YEAST IS LIVE YEAST.....**

in its most active form absolutely pure, free from other organisms. It stimulates digestion prevents the formation of toxins and purifies the entire digestive system. It is an invaluable remedy for all who suffer from Indigestion in any form. ¶ By taking Phillips Yeast, nutrition is improved the blood is purified and enriched and troubles of nervous origin soon disappear.

**PHILLIPS Yeast goes to the root of the trouble. It attacks the ailment at its source.**

To ensure the fullest benefit Phillips Yeast should be taken *actually with food*, during the first half of the meal. It is easy and convenient to take. The dose is quite small *just enough to cover a sixpence*.

PHILLIPS Yeast is not a Patent Medicine.

**QUITE HARMLESS... CONTAINS NO DRUG**

**PHILLIPS YEAST**

- ¶ Ensures perfect Digestion and conquers Dyspepsia.
- ¶ Reduces Uric Acid, the cause of Rheumatism, etc.
- ¶ Purifies the blood, clears Boils and Skin Blemishes.
- ¶ Relieves Headache, Neuralgia & Sciatica.
- ¶ Dispels Nervous Depression, Neurasthenia and Insomnia.
- ¶ Regulates and tones the entire system.

15 days supply 1/3
FAMILY SIZE 3/-
contains treble quantity
OF ALL CHEMISTS

WRITE FOR BOOKLET:
Phillips Yeast Products, Ltd. Dept. S.1 Park Royal Road, London, N.W.10. or West End Office, 150, Regent Street, W.1

**PHILLIPS YEAST** *is specially recommended for* **INDIGESTION**
**... read this remarkable testimony from a Glasgow gentleman writing 25/3/33**

*"I have been a martyr to indigestion for years and have tried all the known remedies. You may know how bad I have been that I had to put my fingers down my throat, but my wife told me to try your YEAST GRANULES and now I am in a new world and will never be without them."*

The original testimonial may be inspected at the Head Office Park Royal Road London, N.W.10

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

### A Clever Combination.

The combination of a perfect-fitting slumber-cap with an elastic chin-strap should be exactly what many of you are looking for, and I have pleasure in introducing a really efficient article of this kind that costs only 3s. 6d. complete. The broad chin-strap works so well. I am told that no creams or lotions are required while the helmet protects the hair most admirably, also assisting to "set" your waves after a visit to the hairdresser. The device is intended, of course, to be worn at night, but is so comfortable that it can be used when reading or resting. It looks quite becoming. The whole thing is made on scientific lines, and the helmet alone is well worth the price.

### Wedding Bells.

The young bride-to-be, needless to say, likes everything connected with the most important event in her life to be absolutely correct and to bear the hall-mark of good taste. Nothing indicates the latter more infallibly than the wedding stationery, and if you wish to avoid the many pitfalls this item offers to the unwary you should entrust your order only to a specialist firm. There is a house in Yorkshire which possesses an enviable reputation for this class of work, at very reasonable prices, and they send out to the trade beautiful pattern books illustrating the most up-to-date styles. You should certainly ask your stationer to let you see these before making your final decision.

### Utility and Beauty.

Here is a picture of some beautiful ware manufactured by a famous British firm. The vegetable dish is in a new shape, and the decoration is effectively carried out in three shades of autumnal browns on a ground-colour of warm cane. A dinner service for six persons (twenty-six pieces) costs just over £4. The graceful animal figure, modelled by a well-known artist, is obtainable in three colours—cane, celadon or cream—and complete with black wood stand, costs only about 16s. Ware of this type combining quality and beauty with moderate price will be welcome in any home.

*A beautiful British dinner service and figure ornament.*

*This portable Tatlow water softener sells at 66s.*

### A Handy Water Softener.

Every woman knows the virtues of rain water in connexion with the hair, skin and complexion, but not all of us realize that it is now possible to have pure water even softer than rain-water flowing from every tap in the house. Soft water is not only good for one's health, but it makes tea and coffee taste better and go farther, prevents the furring up of pipes and kettles, and saves soap and soda. Every year more and more water-softeners are being sold, and I am illustrating here one of the latest, designed for folk with moderate purses. This is of vitreous porcelain, in pastel green, pastel blue, and cream. The fittings are of stainless steel and chromium, and the appliance (which is intended to fit on to any tap, being readily portable) will effectively soften hot as well as cold water. It costs 66s. only.

### Something New in Coal Shovels.

I don't need to describe how difficult it is sometimes to persuade the ordinary coal shovel to insinuate itself below the lumps you want to pick up in the cellar. Some genius, having encountered this difficulty, decided to eliminate it, and therefore invented a *pointed* shovel. The point can be thrust under the coal with ease, the knobs seem to tumble into it automatically. It is remarkable that nobody ever thought of the idea before!

### An Ideal 'Cookery Table.'

Here is a picture of an up-to-date cookery table which I am sure will appeal to many women. It not only saves space but provides handy storage for everything one needs.

*(Continued on page 38.)*

# WEAR A 'SPAN' BRACER INSTEAD OF BRACES

SHOULDERS FREE

CHEST FREEDOM

NO ABDOMINAL STRAIN

(Patent Half Belt)

TROUSERS HANG PERFECTLY

You will never wear braces or belt again once you have experienced the amazing comfort afforded by the "SPAN" BRACER. THE "SPAN" is smarter, healthier and much more efficient. Gloriously free, it enables you to ride, walk, or lounge in the utmost comfort and garments "hang" perfectly every moment. There is no abdominal strain, the elastic sections allowing for muscular movements. Ideal for sports, business and evening wear

STANDARD *Silk Model* 4/9

Colours: Black, Navy, Grey, Brown and Cream.

POPULAR *Model* 2/6

Colours:—Black, Navy, Grey, Brown, Khaki and Cream.

Ask your outfitter or order direct by post to-day. Give waist measure and colour required. Enclose cheque or money order.

*Post Free* *Abroad 3d. extra*

SPAN BRACER CO. (Dept. 4), CASTLE GREEN - - BRISTOL

# The Marie Elisabeth are REAL Sardines

Consumers who want Sardines should be very careful to ASK for Sardines. If they ask for a brand only, they expose themselves to the likelihood of being supplied with some other small fish used as a substitute, which is much less valuable from the dietetic, nourishing and palatable point of view than the Sardine, which is really the only fish suitable for preparation in oil. Hence the recommendation

**"DO ASK FOR SARDINES."**

Marie Elisabeth can be asked for with every confidence, for every tin so branded contains real Sardines and never any other fish; furthermore they are delicious and highly nutritive. They are obtainable throughout the U.K. and their sale is the largest in the World.

# Bring Back Those Holiday Scenes.

The photographer lives his holidays again through the medium of his snapshot album. He cannot afford to have spoilt 'snaps' because those best photographs cannot be replaced.

**To be sure of good results always use**

Agfa

## Roll Films and Film Packs

*Their quality never varies.*

*OF ALL CHEMISTS AND DEALERS.*

AGFA LTD. 14, LAWRENCE STREET, HIGH STREET, W.C.2.

## YOU AND YOUR HOME.

*(Continued.)*

*A cooking table with a reversible top: porcelain for cooking and wood for ironing.*

This particular table, moreover, has a *reversible* top, giving one a porcelain surface for cooking operations and a wooden top for ironing and other jobs. With six glass jars and a rolling pin this "reversible" table costs 98s. 6d. complete; there are other models from 49s. 6d. upwards. Until you have used one you can have no idea how these dresser-and-table-in-one inventions save labour.

### Study Your Digestion.

Most of us like a good cup of tea, but some teas—alas!—do not like us. That is to say, they upset our digestion, probably owing to an excess of tannin or some other mysterious by-product. If you find yourself in this unenviable plight I shall be glad to recommend you to a tea specially blended by a famous firm, which is not only most grateful to the palate, but particularly kind to the digestive organs; even confirmed dyspeptics find that it does not upset them. Some teas intended for delicate stomachs are rather on the insipid side, but this makes a really "flavoury" brew which I am sure you will appreciate. It is Empire grown and costs only 7½d. per quarter-pound.

### Summer Linens.

The discerning housewife is always looking ahead, for which reason I make no apologies for mentioning the subject of summer linens. If you want real Irish linens of the finest quality at bargain prices, drop me a line for an address. Catalogues are sent free, and you will be astonished at the values offered. I have been looking at some very charming cream cloths, with attractive coloured borders and overchecks in blue or gold, which would look delightful on the breakfast or supper table. In beautiful linen, guaranteed to wash and wear splendidly, these cost only 2s. 10d. each. The makers offer dozens of similar bargains, and undertake to return your money if you are not satisfied.

### A Man's Present.

An excellent present for a man—the sort of gift that convinces him you are really knowledgeable—is a neat little stud-wallet. This contains a special shape of gold stud for each type of collar and also, if desired, a pair of sleeve-links. A wallet of crushed sealskin containing six 9ct. studs, all beautifully made, costs about 33s. The makers are so confident as to the merits of their studs that they offer to exchange broken or damaged ones free of charge at any time. As to links, there are dozens of most attractive designs to choose from at all prices from 15s. upwards. I was particularly pleased with some gold links exquisitely enamelled with school colours and regimental crests—a topnole gift indeed. I shall be glad to put readers in touch with the firm concerned.

### "Slimming" for Health.

The matter of *embonpoint* and increasing weight, to judge by my letter-bag, is a sore trial to many of us, both young and middle-aged. I do not recommend drugs and reducing diets—these are matters for a qualified medical man after studying the individual case—but I *do* think that lots of home-keeping women would be all the better for more exercise. I have seen remarkable results achieved by the regular use, for a short period every day, of one of those excellent "rowing machines." You merely sit on the seat and row, making your daily dozen, gentle or strenuous, according to how you feel; but the effect upon the abdominal muscles, superfluous fat, and one's general well-being is really astonishing. These machines can be enjoyed by every member of the family, are very strongly built, and can be used in your own room. There is a splendid model at 84s. complete that should last a lifetime.

### "Colour Harmonies."

If you are contemplating re-decorating your home this year, and the old problem of "colour harmonies" worries you, I strongly advise you to study a handsome illustrated brochure on this very subject which has been prepared by a well-known firm of paint manufacturers. The booklet is written by Mrs. Grace Lovat-Fraser, the well-known authority on modern decoration, and is brimful of "ideas," showing what charming effects can be secured provided one makes the right choice of colours and materials. This beautifully produced brochure is sent free on request, and you will find it most helpful.

Miladi.

# MINTY CLUB CHAIR

This chair offers luxurious comfort and restful support at a moderate cost. Framed in hardwoods, each part separately hand-made, featuring arms of different widths to suit individual requirements. Can be had in many coverings to match modern schemes as well as traditional.

All springing interlaced with heavy webbing for permanent shape.

Prices of Chair according to length of seat

**From £3-15-0**

SETTEE £7-7-0.

Suite complete comprising Settee, 1 chair in size and small chair £18-7-0.

The **'Isis'** MINTY CLUB CHAIR ON MODERN LINES

Pampers the human form as never before. The sprung back and doubly sprung seat have patent pocketed inscherdown cushions. Pure hair upholstery. Frame, seat and back are separate units.

PRICES, according to length of seat

CHAIRS from £5-15-0. SETTEES from £10-10-0

Write for Catalogue of the Minty Variety and Club Chairs, and patterns of coverings

Minty Ltd.

(Dept. 28), 44/45, HIGH ST., OXFORD.

London Showrooms: 123, VICTORIA ST., WESTMINSTER, S.W.1

Manchester Showrooms: 5, Exchange Street.

Pat. No. 4074



## REMOVE THE *SIGN* OF AGE!

Sufferers from [illegible] should know that Pain, and its cause, can be very easily banished by perpendicular pressure with the new REDUCA "BENGEL" Helmet. Send for free booklet giving full particulars and testimonials.

The Helmet automatically keeps your hair gently pressed in position.

From good Hairdressers and Stores.

Price 8/6 complete.

Postage 3d. extra.

Large Super product

If unobtainable locally write to—Jarrod, Reinsford & Langridge, Ltd. (Dept. 28), Bristol, for descriptive booklet.

"REDUCA" CHIN-STRAP HELMET Patent No. 381501

THE "SELVYT"

Registered Trade Mark

POLISHING CLOTH and DUSTER

FOR FURNITURE, MOTOR CARS, AEROPLANES, GRAMOPHONE RECORDS, GLASS, JEWELLERY, LEATHERS, ETC.

Will not scratch the most delicate surface.

Picks up dust, does not scatter it.

Good as new when washed.

Sizes 10 inches to 28 inches square

2 qualities—pile one side and pile both sides

*Stocked by all good shops and stores. In case of difficulty apply* "SELVYT," MANCHESTER, ENGLAND.



## 194 TOOTHPASTES REJECTED

### But the 195th . . . . !

Every year, every month, every day, every month that goes by brings us some new record of scientific achievement. Something travels faster or flies higher than man has ever gone before. Somebody invents something that makes our cars or telephones or radio sets more efficient. Somebody discovers something which we can add a little more to our comfort or well-being on this earth.

It happens again with the bringing to perfection of the new Milton toothpaste. Here was a firm already famous for having produced the first harmless and yet immensely powerful antiseptic fluid known as Milton. Having provided the wearer of false teeth with a long needed, efficient, and simple way of cleansing them, the proprietors of Milton have now produced for the owners of natural teeth a great new toothpaste.

It was not easy. Many good toothpastes already existed. But the Milton people knew that a better toothpaste than them all could be made. And so they set about it. Through more than two years of unbelievably research. Scores of experiments were tried and tested. No fewer than a hundred and ninety-four formulas were explored and put aside, when a last was found the one which succeeded even the most ambitious ideals which the makers set themselves. For our toothpaste is not only delicious, but it will clean the teeth as few other toothpastes can, it will whiten them with a sparkling like freshness, a foaming power so marked that your teeth will feel as clean as when they left the dentist's chair, and perhaps even cleaner, because it will do this without the use of any gritty or damaging ingredient. A convenience, but penetrates to the very roots of your teeth, the makers tell you, thanks to the use of that unique ingredient of the famous Milton fluid to which we have already referred. They tell us why.

Will you try Milton toothpaste? You will not only like it—its fine fresh fruity taste, but you will be grateful for the wonders it will work with your teeth.

This Dental Cream costs only 1d. more for the ordinary sized tube, and a shilling for the large one (more than double the size). Milton Dental Cream, in fact, is not only so much better—it is even cheaper.

# Index to "Strand Magazine" Advertisements


**Bath Cabinets.**
Foot, J., & Son — 18

**Beverages.**
Mason's Rotadi Beer — 4

**Boots, Shoes, Etc.**
Barratt W. & Co., Ltd. — 28
Mellonian Cream — 10 & 26
Norvell's Perth Footwear — 10
Patent Shoe Co. — 28

**Camping Outfits, Tents, Etc.**
Lightweight Tent Supply — 24

**Charities.**
Dr Barnardo's Homes — 6

**Cigarettes, Cigars, Tobacco, Pipes, Etc.**
Canadian Club Tobacco — Cover 3
Craven Mixture Tobacco — Cover 2

**Clocks, Watches, Etc.**
Benson, J. W., Ltd. — 9

**Confectionery, Etc.**
Cadbury's Chocolate — 20
Fox's Glacier Mint — 10
Simpkins Barley Sugar — 4

**Educational.**
Bennett College — 6
International Corr. Schools
John Hassall Corr. Art School — 21
Metropolitan College — 17
Pelman Institute — 8
Pelman Language Inst. — 21
Pitman's Corr. College — 4
Premier School of Journalism — 1
Press Art School — 13
Regent Institute — 10
School of Accountancy — 2
Shaw-Dupleyan Shorthand — 24
Technologeum, Inst. of G. Britain — 20

**Food Products.**
Marie Elizabeth Sardines — 27
Nestlé's Milk — 4
Oxo — Cover 3
Yorkshire Relish — 2

**Fountain Pens, Pencils, Etc.**
Waterman Pens — Back Cover

**Furniture and Furnishing.**
Foot's Adapta Bed Table — 12
Foot's Bed Chair — 20
Minty Bookcase — 14
Minty Chair — 30
Sommus Mattress — 29

**Guns, Pistols, Etc.**
Midland Gun Co. — 24

**Holiday Resorts.**
Blake's (Norfolk Broads — Cover 3

**Hosiery, Etc.**
Fox's Pulfers — 26
Luvisca Collars — 32
"Sion" Bracer Half-Belt — 27

**Household Linen, Curtains, Lace, Etc.**
Hutton's Irish Linen — 1

**Household Requisites.**
Flexible Soldering Set — 4
Fluxaudhes Fire Cement — 24
Selvyt Polishing Cloth & Duster — 20
Solon Electric Soldering Iron — 28
"Tetthro" Water Softener — 30

**Hygienic and Surgical Appliances.**
Bailey, W. H., & Son, Ltd. — 22
Brooks Appliance Co. — 18
H. S. Wales Co. (Sound Discs) — 24
Lock Ray (Nose Shaper — 24
O'Connor Extension Co. — 24
Orelliettes — 24
Salmon Ody Ltd. (Trusses) — 22
Wilson Ear Drum — 8

**Insurance, Investments, Etc.**
London & Lancs. Assurance Co. Insurance — 31
Prudential Assur. Co. — 31
Saltdean — Sheet

**Invalid Furniture, Appliances, Etc.**
Cutler's Invalid Chairs — 5
R. A. Harding — 15

**Jewellery, Etc.**
Cleo Pearls — 28
Johnstone, G. H. & Co. (Stanle) — 9

**Medical.**
Allenbury's Pastilles — 2
Bile Beans — 11
Dinneford's Magnesia — 33
Eagoff Brewing Gum — 24
Equanosia Medicine Co. — 6
Genasprin — 33
Le-Mat Laboratories — 8
Maclean's Stomach Powder — 18
Milton — 19
Phillips' Yeast — 32
Robinson J. & Sons — 24
Turvey Treatment Association — 12
Vapex Inhalant — 20
Woods, E. J., Ltd. — 30
Zam-Buk — 15

**Miscellaneous.**
Flower Roof Felt — 25

**Musical.**
Macdonald Smith Pianoforte Course — 24

**Paint, Varnish, Etc.**
Pinchin Johnson & Co., Ltd. — 6

**Patent and Tonic Foods.**
Cheltine Tonic — 24
Kellogg's Corn Flakes — 7
Ovaltine Tonic Food — 8

**Photography.**
Agfa Film — 37
Martin — 40

**Physical Culture and Appliances.**
Carter, P. — 24
Challoner Co. —
Ross, Malcolm & — 21
Sandow, A. M. — 10
Slebbing System — 20 & 24
Terry Sculling Exerciser — 17
Warrington, Son & Co. (Sculling Exercise) — 9

**Publishers' Announcements.**
Adam & Co. — 8
Home Movies — 8
Home Photographer — 6
John o' London's Weekly — 40
Wide World Magazine — 22

**Razors, Safety Razors, Blades, Etc.**
Ayatt Blades — 27
Autolox Safety Razor — 40
7 o'Clock Blades — 23

**Stationery, Printing, Etc.**
Brandauer's Pens — 29
Gillott's Bonliess Pens — 2
Perry's Pens — 25
Relief Nib — 13

**Tailors.**
Burberrys, Ltd. — 15
Graves & Lindley — 13

**Toilet.**
Bromley, F. W. — 19
Packtalite Co. — 23
Rectifex Chin-Strap Helmet — 29
Rowland's Macassar Oil — 6
Rhodeine Co. — 24
Vinolax & Co. — 12

**Toys, Games, Models, Etc.**
Herbert's Plasticine — 19

**Typewriters and Accessories.**
Taylor's Typewriters — 23

**Underwear.**
Aertex — 41
Happy Valley Underwear — 22
"Lifesome" Body Belt — 23
Lewins Shirts and Pyjamas — 27
Rousel Linda Belt — 3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**DEVELOPING & PRINTING**

POST YOUR FILMS TO ME. 1 develop & print 2 V.P.K. or No. 2 Brownie for 1/-.

1½

MARTIN CHEMIST SOUTHAMPTON

AN ESTABLISHED WEEKLY.—Every Saturday, Twopence

**JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY**

*Read from Land's End to John o' Groats.*

On sale at all Bookshops and Bookstalls, or post free 3d. to any address in the world from the Publishers.

GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8-11, Southampton St., Strand, London, W.C.2.


Printed by THE NEWNES & PEARSON PRINTING CO., LTD., 8 Kensington, for the Proprietors, GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

# This AMERICAN tobacco enjoys preferential duty

WHEN Canadian Tobacco was first introduced into this country it was used by blenders to improve many popular brands. Climate, soil and geographical situation all conspire to make it the twin of Virginia's finest product. Now it is presented under its own colours—cool, mellow, satisfying. Try it to-day for your greater smoking enjoyment.

**CANADIAN CLUB tobaccos**

FIVE STYLES—Cut ... Navy Cut, Rough Cut, Flake and Mixture.

**SPECIAL EXPORT TINS**

Canadian Club Tobaccos in all five varieties mentioned above and Canadian Club Cigarettes are specially packed in air-tight tins for export. No matter where you live, Canadian Club will arrive as fresh as if it were packed only yesterday.

**11½d. PER ½ OZ.** *Issued by the Proprietors* **2-OZ TIN 1/10**

GODFREY PHILLIPS *Ltd* LONDON & MELBOURNE *Established 1844*

## GREAT FREE HOLIDAY OFFER.

*Get a copy to-day*

THE NORFOLK BROADS, with their natural beauties and quiet old-world villages, will enchant you. They are 130 miles from London, and consist of 200 miles of safe inland rivers and lakes, situated between Lowestoft, Yarmouth and the fine old city of Norwich, with its Cathedral and castle. You have room us for a week or longer a fully furnished wherry, yacht, or motor-boat which becomes your floating home, moving when and where you wish inland, river or sea. We can, if required, supply an attendant to navigate the craft and do all cooking. You only have to enjoy yourself. The cost (including food, etc.) averages £4 per head per week.

*Send 6d. stamps for P.O. for* NORFOLK BROADS HOLIDAYS ABROAD, *32th pages, various details of 600 Yachts, Motor Cruisers, etc., we have for hire. How to obtain a Broads Holiday. How to run a Motor-Cruiser. Map. Lists of colour, etc. The Origin of the Inland Waterways of East Anglia. Broadland Birds." Plates in colour.* GREAT FREE HOLIDAY OFFER. *Obtainable also through all W. H. Smith & Son's and Wilson Hookstalls.*

Train Services, Fares, and other information from any L.N.E.R. or L.M.S. Enquiry Office.

**BLAKE'S** 14, BROADLAND HOUSE, 21, NEWGATE ST., LONDON, E.C.1.

# Acquaint Cook if she forgets—

# OXO

## Beef in Brief

# An outstanding achievement in FOUNTAIN PENS

# Waterman's £1 PEN

FOR men, in the size as shown; for ladies, smaller for the smaller hand. In three exquisite styles; a happy blending of crimson and gold, an equally delightful blending of green and gold and in the always charming jet. Waterman perfection of finish, Waterman supremacy in performance. A lifetime of efficient service. There is a pencil to match the pen. See the sets, including those with pen, pencil, and combined pocket knife and letter opener.

Other beautiful Waterman models—the Handcrafted Patrician for men—**50/-**. Lady Patricia **25/-**. Each in six colours. Pencils to match.

Waterman's from 10/6. Empire made.
Of Stationers and Jewellers.

No. 92 the £1 pen in [illegible] and [illegible] Complete [illegible] No. 9 Pencil to match each pen - - 7/6.

## Waterman's Ink

Here is the new Traveller's Filler—the "LINSDEN" fitted with Waterman's London made Ink. In smart coloured case 2/6.

*The Pen Book, illustrating other models, free from—*

**L. G. SLOAN, Ltd., The Pen Corner, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.**

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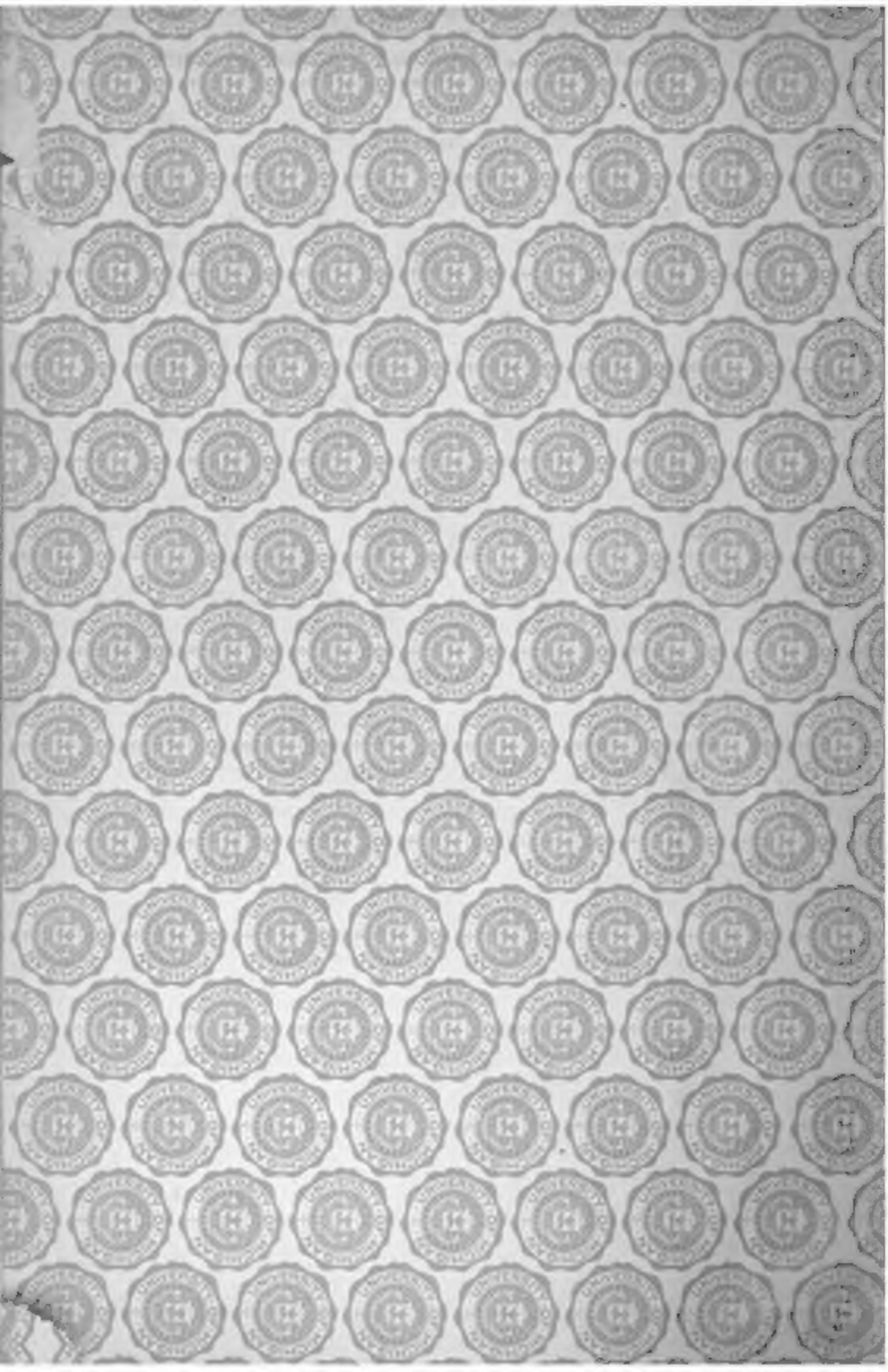

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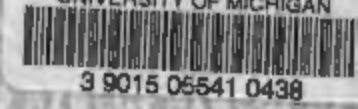

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